



**GEORGIA VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION AGENCY**

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

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# Client Services Policy Manual

# GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCY

## Vocational Rehabilitation Program Client Services Policy Manual

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## INTRODUCTION

### Authority

The authority for the Client Services Policy Manual (CSPM) is, unless otherwise specified, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and current federal regulations for the law at 34 C.F.R. 361 and 363, unless otherwise specified.

### Purpose

The purpose of the CSPM is to establish a framework for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program of the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. This framework serves many purposes. It ensures fairness and consistency for clients, compliance with federal and state laws, protection for service delivery staff, and qualified job applicants for employers. It also helps all partners in the rehabilitation process to make appropriate and reasonable choices. All VR staff are responsible for understanding policy and applying it appropriately.

Many of the policies in this manual are required by the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the assurances in the state plan. Policies are also based on federal and state rules and regulations. The intent is to facilitate the rehabilitation process, not to create barriers. Therefore, when circumstances warrant, flexibility may be permissible.

### Future Changes

Policy is a living document and can change as long as the change does not conflict with current rules, laws and regulations. Any staff person may influence a policy change. There are several opportunities to effect change:

- Serving on a policy committee;
- Sharing ideas with members of management; or
- By sharing ideas/suggestions to a member of the policy unit.

### Structure

There are six (6) sections to this CSPM. Each section has several topics and each topic has two parts as follows:

1. The first part is “Policy”, which contains the requirements of the topic (except in the Services Section where policy also provides options);

2. The second part is “Information”, which contains additional information about the topic that may be helpful.

When researching a topic, first read the introduction to the section in which the topic appears; then read the entire topic to obtain a full understanding. It is important to read the introduction to each section as it contains policy which is applicable to all topics in the section. For example, the first topic in Section 500, “Case Closure/ General”, is applicable to all closures.

Policy is intended to guide clients through the rehabilitation process ending in successful employment.

Policy & Compliance Manager  
March 1, 2022

# **Section 100.0.00**

## **Case Management**



**SECTION 100.0.00  
CASE MANAGEMENT  
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**SECTION 100.0.00**  
**CASE MANAGEMENT**

**102.0.00      NONDISCRIMINATION**

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Authority: 34 CFR 361, Section 504 of the Act, 29 U.S.C. § 794, and  
implementing regulations

20 U.S.C. § 1681

42 U.S.C. § 2000-d

42 U.S.C. § 6101

42 U.S.C. § 12031

**102.1.00      POLICY:**

**102.1.01**      The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) shall administer and conduct its vocational rehabilitation program activities without regard to age, gender, race, color, creed or national origin.

**102.1.02**      No individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under VR because the Agency's or a provider's facilities are inaccessible or unusable.

**102.1.03**      VR shall operate in accordance with the definitions of "individual with a disability" contained in 34 CFR 361.5(c)(28), as amended. Within these definitions, VR shall administer and conduct all programs and activities without discrimination on the basis of or type of disability.

**102.1.04**      During all parts of the process, appropriate modes of communication shall be used to enable a person with a disability to comprehend and respond to information that is being communicated. Where necessary, communication shall be supplemented with an appropriate alternate mode of communication.

**102.1.05**      Translational, interpretative or reader services shall be provided, as needed, for an applicant/client to comprehend and respond to information that is being communicated where the applicant/client is not familiar with the English language.

- 102.1.06 At the time of application, staff shall inform the applicant of the availability of alternate modes of communication. The necessity or lack of necessity for the use of an appropriate alternate mode of communication shall be recorded on the application.
- 102.1.07 When indicated, an alternate appropriate mode of communication shall be used at the following points:
- A. Provision of a copy of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) to the individual or, as appropriate, their authorized representative;
  - B. As a supplement to the written notice of change; and
  - C. As a means to inform the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's authorized representative, of information concerning the availability and scope of informed choices, the manner in which informed choice may be exercised, and the availability of support services for individuals with cognitive or other disabilities who require assistance in exercising informed choice. Refer to Glossary: Informed Choice
- 104.0.00 POLICY EXCEPTION CRITERIA  
Effective Date: January 15, 2005  
Revised Date: November 1, 2017
- 104.1.00 POLICY:
- 104.1.01 Policy Unit staff may grant an exception to policy for a specific individual for the purpose of meeting that individual's unique rehabilitation requirements if the requirements are necessary for the individual's movement toward their employment goal.
- 104.1.02 A policy exception request must be made in writing prior to any obligation for the exception on behalf of VR. The request and the response to the request shall be maintained in the case file.
- 104.1.03 The policy exception request must be initiated by a counselor.

- 104.1.04 A policy exception shall only be granted if the request meets the criteria listed below:
- A. Needs of the individual: The exception to policy must be necessary because of the unique needs of the individual. The request for the exception must explain why policy should not apply to the particular individual's services. (Example: A service may have a specified duration. However, because of a very significant impairment, an individual may need the service longer than the specified duration to be able to benefit from the service.)
  - B. Legality: The granting of the policy exception will not violate any federal or state law or regulation.
  - C. Intent of the policy: Granting the exception will not violate the intent of the given policy. (Example: Policy requires that there be evidence in the case file that an individual can succeed in training before that training can be provided. The intent of the policy is to ensure that individuals are moving appropriately toward a viable employment goal and to ensure the prudent and effective use of public funds. An exception to this policy would violate its intent.)
  - D. Fairness and equity: The granting of the exception will not violate fairness to other individuals. (Example: Policy exceptions allowing payment for services requiring financial need to persons who do not meet financial need.)

106.0.00 AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: November 1, 2017  
Authority: Section 100(a)(3)(F) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. § 720

106.1.00 POLICY:

106.1.01 A reportable individual/applicant/client (individual) may be assisted by an authorized representative in order to communicate with VR staff. Designation of an authorized representative by an individual must be in writing.

An individual may be assisted by another individual to communicate with VR. Assistance may be provided by a parent or other family member, guardian,

advocate or other authorized representative. When VR possesses documentary evidence of the identity and authority of the authorized representative, VR staff shall communicate with and provide information to the authorized representative in the same manner as with the reportable individual/applicant/client.

- 106.1.02 An individual may revoke the authority of an authorized representative by providing written notice to VR.
- 106.1.03 The parent(s) of an individual who is a minor (i.e., under the age of eighteen years) shall be presumed to be the individual's authorized representative, unless parental rights have been terminated, as documented by a certified copy of the court order.
- 106.1.04 When an individual purports to act as a reportable individual/applicant's/client's authorized representative based on legal guardianship, the individual shall provide to the VR Program a certified copy of the court order assigning guardianship. No additional consent by the reportable individual/applicant/client is required.
- 106.1.05 When a family member who does not have legal custody of an individual (e.g., the parent of the individual who has reached the age of majority (eighteen years) or another family member purports to act the authorized representative, the individual shall provide written consent to VR of the individual's authority to act as the authorized representative.
- 106.1.06 When an individual, advocate or advocacy group, including but not limited to the Client Assistance Program, a legal services agency, independent living advocate, etc., purports to act as an individual's authorized representative, the individual shall provide written consent to VR of the advocate's authority to act as such.
- 106.1.07 To revoke the authority of an authorized representative, other than a parent of a minor or a guardian, an individual may either sign the bottom portion of VR release form or provide other written notice to their counselor.

108.0.00 CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: November 1, 2017

Authority: 34 CFR 370

108.1.00 POLICY:

108.1.01 VR staff shall advise each reportable individual/applicant/client or authorized representative (individual) where appropriate, of the availability of services of the Client Assistance Program (CAP).

108.1.02 VR staff shall share information regarding an individual with CAP staff, after the individual, where appropriate, has authorized that communication by providing written consent to VR.

108.1.03 VR staff shall inform each individual of the availability of CAP:

- A. At the time the Pre-ETS release is received;
- B. At the time of the application by providing VR's Client Services Handbook to the applicant;
- C. At the time the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is signed by giving the client a signed copy of the plan;
- D. At the time of any IPE amendment;
- E. At the time of case closure using VR's Notice of Change form, except when the client has:
  - 1. Died; or
  - 2. Their residence is unknown, as indicated by envelope(s) returned by the post office contained in the case file.

- 110.0.00     PROTECTION AND USE OF APPLICANT/CLIENT INFORMATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Authority: 34 CFR 361.38  
O.C.G.A 49 9 16
- 110.1.00     POLICY:
- 110.1.01     VR shall hold confidential any information developed, purchased, or provided to the Agency regarding any individual seeking services.
- 110.1.02     Confidential information shall be released only in accordance with state law, federal law and regulations, or VR policy and is exempt from the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-76), and from third party discovery in litigation (O.C.G.A. 9-11-34).
- 110.1.03     Personal information in the possession of VR shall be used only for purposes directly connected with the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program. Information containing identifiable personal information may not be shared with advisory or other bodies that do not have official responsibility for administration of the program, except that confidential information may be shared with the State Rehabilitation Council as the information relates to its role in conducting a review and analysis of the effectiveness of and consumer satisfaction with vocational rehabilitation services and providers in the state.
- 110.1.04     All applicants, clients, representatives of applicants or clients, and, as appropriate, service providers, cooperating agencies and interested persons shall be informed of the confidentiality of personal information and the conditions for accessing and releasing this information.
- 110.1.05     All applicants shall be informed of their right to request removal or amendment of misleading or inaccurate information from their case file. Refer to 110.1.09
- 110.1.06     Persons who are unable to communicate in English or who rely on alternate modes of communication shall be provided explanations about VR policies and procedures affecting personal information through methods that can be adequately understood by them. Refer to 476.0.00, 496.0.00, and 102.1.04

- 110.1.07 Each applicant/client case file shall be clearly labeled CONFIDENTIAL on the front of the file.
- 110.1.08 All applicants and/or their representatives shall be given information concerning the protection, use and release of personal information, contained within the Client Services Handbook, to inform them about VR's need to collect personal information and the policies governing its use, including:
- A. Explanation of the principal purpose for which VR intends to use or release the information;
  - B. Explanation of whether the information is mandatory or voluntary and the effects of not providing requested information to VR;
  - C. Identification of those situations in which VR requires or does not require informed written consent of the individual before information may be released; and
  - D. Identification of other agencies to which information is routinely released.
- 110.1.09 If an individual requests information which they view as misleading or inaccurate be removed from or amended in their case file, then:
- The request shall be made in writing and shall include a justification for why the information should be removed or amended;
- A. A decision concerning the removal or amendment of any requested information shall be made by the supervisor in consultation with the counselor and, as appropriate, Policy on a case-by-case basis.
  - B. The supervisor's decision to remove, keep or amend information in a case file shall be documented in the case file and notice of the action provided to the client. If the request is denied, the Notice of Change form shall be used to provide notice of the action; Refer to 136.1.02.
  - C. If the information is not removed or amended, the individual has the right to have their rebuttal of the information placed in their file.



- 110.1.10 Active clients who are approved providers for VR may work with other active clients who require their services in order to go to work. Caution should be taken to ensure confidentiality and to avoid conflicts of interest. Both individuals should not be served in the same VR unit; however, with manager approval, this may be allowed due to limited community resources and individual client needs.
- 112.0.00 RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Authority: 34 CFR 361.38
- 112.1.00 POLICY:
- 112.1.01 Upon receipt of the written consent of an individual, or their authorized representative, VR shall release confidential information regarding that individual except in the following, circumstances:
- A. Any medical, psychological or other information deemed harmful to the client by VR shall not be released directly to the individual but must be provided to the individual through a third party chosen by the individual or a court appointed representative; or
  - B. Third party information shall never be released, unless a third party release has been obtained; or
  - C. Only information related to the functional limitation(s) of the individual can be released to employers.
- 112.1.02 Legal consultation shall be sought in any instance when there is legal notification of pending litigation against VR or its representative. Under no circumstances shall VR staff initiate communication with the office of the attorney general.
- 112.1.03 VR staff shall report any of the following to their supervisor and shall immediately notify the Policy Unit if contact is made, or confidential information is requested, under any of the following circumstances:
- A. VR receives any document designated as a lawsuit, subpoena, request for documents or deposition. In this situation:

1. Staff shall not sign any acknowledgement of receipt for any document;
2. Staff shall note the time and method of delivery (e.g., U.S. Mail, facsimile, personal service, etc.); identity, title and employer of the server (if the document is hand-delivered);
3. Staff shall ensure that personal contact is made with the Policy Unit by close of business of the day on which the communication was received by VR staff;
4. If VR staff receive a subpoena that compels the employee's appearance before assistance can be obtained from the Policy Unit, the employee shall provide copies of O.C.G.A. 49-9-16 and 34 C.F.R. 361.38 to the judge and shall notify the judge that the employee can violate applicant/client confidentiality only upon the direct order of the court. If the judge issues such an order, either orally or in writing, then the employee shall testify as ordered.

B. The VR Program receives any document designated as an "Open Records Act" or "Freedom of Information Act" request. In this situation, staff shall ensure that personal contact is made with the Policy Unit manager by close of business of the day on which the communication was received by VR staff.

C. An attorney contacts a VR employee regarding an applicant/client, either by telephone or in writing, except those routine contacts regarding Social Security disability claims in which the attorney represents the applicant/client.

D. A law enforcement officer, or other investigator contacts a VR employee regarding an applicant/client, either by telephone or writing.

112.1.04 Any information released from a case file shall be stamped with the following:

"Property of the Georgia Program of Rehabilitation Services. This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by federal and state law. Any further disclosure by you is prohibited."

112.1.05 Release of information with the consent of the applicant/client:

- A. Confidential information shall be made available to an applicant/client or other person/entity designated by the applicant/client, where the client provides VR with informed written consent for the release.

NOTE: The exceptions to the above policy are listed in 112.1.06.

- B. Informed written consent shall include the purpose for which the information is desired, specific information desired, date of expiration of the consent and dated signature of the applicant/client or their authorized representative. The VR Authorization for Release of Information form shall be used when the Program initiates the request for release; the form should be used whenever possible.
- C. Information may be released to another program or authority for its program purposes, to the extent that the program or authority demonstrates that the information requested is necessary for its program. Medical or psychological information which the Program believes may be harmful to the individual may be released only when the other agency or organization assures VR that the information shall be used only for the purposes for which it is being provided and shall not be further released to the involved individual.

**112.1.06 Release of information without applicant/client consent:**

- A. VR may release confidential information, in an emergency situation, to protect an applicant/client or others when the applicant/client poses a threat to their safety or the safety of others. Example: Threat of suicide or of violence against another individual, including program staff.
- B. VR shall release information in response to investigations involving law enforcement fraud or abuse, except when expressly prohibited by federal or state laws or regulations.
- C. VR shall release information as mandated by judicial order. A judicial order includes any subpoena signed by a judge, clerk of the court, or other direct command of a court. Regardless of how a document is titled, if an attorney (rather than a judge or clerk of court) signed the document, it is not a judicial order.

D. Release of information for Audit, Evaluation and Research:

1. Requests for information to be used for audit, evaluation and research must be routed through the Policy Unit and approved by VR Leadership. Program employees shall require appropriate identification and authorization prior to releasing any information to such a request.
2. Personal information may be released to an organization, agency, or individual engaged in an approved audit, evaluation, or research only for purposes directly connected with the administration of the rehabilitation program, or for purposes which would significantly improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities, and only if the organization, agency, or individual assures that:
  - a. The information shall be used only for purposes for which it is being provided;
  - b. The information shall be released only to persons officially connected with the audit, evaluation or research;
  - c. The information shall not be released to the involved individual;
  - d. The information shall be managed in a manner to safeguard confidentiality; and
  - e. The final product shall not reveal any personal identifying information without the informed written consent of the involved individual, or their representative.

114.0.00      OBTAINING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

114.1.00      POLICY:

114.1.01      VR shall obtain sufficient information about an individual to determine the individual's eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs.

- 114.1.02 VR shall obtain information about a client to assist him/her in the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and/or the provision of services.
- 114.1.03 To the maximum extent possible, and when appropriate and in accordance with confidentiality requirements, VR shall use existing information and such information as can be provided by the individual and, where appropriate, by the family of the individual.
- 114.1.04 When VR requests information from a third party in order to assess or provide services to an applicant/client, VR shall use VR's Authorization for Release of Information form to document the applicant's/client's informed written consent. The applicant/client shall sign and date the release form.
- 116.0.00 SECURITY AND DESTRUCTION OF CASE FILES  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018  
Authority: 34 CFR 361.38
- 116.1.00 POLICY:
- 116.1.01 VR staff shall exercise care to protect active and stored case files from the possibility of loss or destruction.
- 116.1.02 Direct access to an individual's case file shall be limited to VR staff on a need-to-know basis, unless access has been administratively authorized.
- 116.1.03 Information and/or data shall only be released from a case file in conformance with the release of confidential information.
- 116.1.04 Closed case files shall be archived or destroyed three years following closure except those with specific retention requirements. Records identified for destruction shall be destroyed in such a way as to eliminate all personal identifying information; shredding is preferred. VR Leadership is responsible for ensuring proper security and destruction of case files.
- 116.1.05 The following case files shall be maintained and/or destroyed as stated:

- A. Cases in which the clients receive SSI or SSDI shall be maintained for seven (7) years.
- B. Cases with ineligibility closure reasons are maintained for twenty (20) years. Refer to 518.1.01.
- C. Cases involved in an active audit or investigation shall not be destroyed.
- D. Cases involved in litigation, in which the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency or an employee is a named party, shall not be destroyed.
- E. Cases under assessment contract or any case under special contract shall be retained for the length of time mandated by said contract.
- F. Other cases may be retained at VR Leadership direction.

116.1.06 Case file(s) so retained shall not be merged with any active case file.

116.1.07 Access to case files shall be limited to those GVRA staff that are authorized to have rights to the case in the case management system.

116.1.08 Case file(s) shall be secured in locked rooms and/or cabinets with access available during business hours.

118.0.00 EMPLOYEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020  
Authority: O.C.G.A. 45-10-1 et seq.

118.1.00 POLICY:

118.1.01 Conflict of interest shall be avoided in the delivery of services to persons with disabilities.

118.1.02 No employee of VR shall determine eligibility or authorize any service to their family member or partner.

- 118.1.03 No employee of VR shall refer an applicant/client of the VR Program to a provider who is a relative, family member or partner of the employee for service of any type without supervisory approval.
- 118.1.04 As an agent of VR, no employee shall advance an applicant/client any personal funds. Reimbursement of personal funds shall not be allowed.
- 118.1.05 No employee shall hire an applicant/client whose services may be directly influenced by the employee.
- 118.1.06 Each employee shall maintain a professional relationship with applicants/clients.
- 118.1.07 No employee shall exploit an applicant/client or their property for the employee's own profit or advantage.
- 118.1.08 Relatives, family members, or partners of VR employees who become applicants for VR services shall be served in a different office than the one in which the employee works.
- 118.1.09 A conflict of interest may exist in situations where only the appearance of impropriety exists.
- 120.0.00 **CASE FILE REQUIREMENTS**  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
120. 1.00 **POLICY:**
- 120.1.01 The counselor serves as the case file custodian.
- 120.1.02 Each case file shall be maintained in accordance with the Standard for Case File organization.
- 120.1.03 Each case file shall include, to the extent necessary, pertinent information and documentation for the timely processing of the vocational rehabilitation case.
- 120.1.04 If a client requests that information which they consider to be misleading or inaccurate be removed from the case file, documentation of the request and

resulting VR action shall be placed in the case file. If it is decided that no information is to be removed or amended, then any written rebuttal of the individual shall be placed in the case file. Refer to 110.0.00

- 120.1.05 Case file documentation shall reflect that informed client choice has been afforded the client throughout the life of the case.
- 120.1.06 Case file documentation shall reflect counselor contact and/or service delivery progress as required on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or IPE amendment for review of the plan objectives, but shall be done no less than every ninety (90) days.
- 120.1.07 The case file shall contain the following as required by the individual case development:

Note: This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing. Any applicable documentation requirement(s) contained in VR policy not listed herein shall be included.

- A. Justification for Trial Work Experience(s); Refer to 212.0.00
- B. Determination of Eligibility; Refer to 214.0.00
- C. Priority category must be separately captioned: The priority category placement and rationale for priority category classification shall appear under the caption. The rationale must include the functional capacities affected and the primary services with their expected durations; Refer to 218.0.00
- D. Determination of Ineligibility; Refer to 216.0.00
- E. Determination of Eligibility for Supported Employment; Refer to 416.0.00
- F. Case transfer summary: This can be a letter to the receiving counselor with a copy to the client's file or a summary included on the case history; Refer to 134.0.00
- G. Case notes to document the justification for the delay of case movement through assigned statuses.



120.1.08 The case file shall contain the following information or documentation as appropriate and as required for the individual's case development:

NOTE: This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing. Any applicable documentation requirement(s) contained in VR policy not listed herein shall be included.

- A. Completed and signed application;
- B. Completed, signed and dated authorization for release of information;
- C. Specialist, treatment, and evaluation report(s);
- D. ALL VR Notice of Change Concerning Rehabilitation Services form(s);
- E. Rationale for policy exceptions and supporting documentation;
- F. Documentation as to how informed choice was afforded the client with regard to Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development;
- G. Completed and signed Financial Need Assessment form;
- H. Documentation relating to the eligibility of the individual for any comparable benefits and the use of any comparable benefits;
- I. Authorization and Invoice(s);
- J. Evidence of any case reviews as required by policy or as requested by the client for the following:
  - 1. Case closed ineligible status due to inability to benefit from services based on the severity of the disability;
- K. Review of client's case in Trial Work Experience(s) every ninety (90) days;
- L. Documentation concerning any action and decision involving the individual's request for an informal administrative review of VR action and fair hearing;

- M. Rationale for an authorization for ALL services;
- N. Documentation of counseling progress if the IPE reflects a planned counseling service;
- O. Evidence of client's ability to complete a selected training program;
- P. Documentation of personal contact with client;
- Q. Written permission from owner to modify a residence or job site;
- R. Rationale for the purchase of tools and/or equipment;
- S. Documentation supporting any decision to authorize or provide purchased services to a family member;
- T. Documentation as to the reason for closing the case including the individual's employment status and, if determined to be rehabilitated, the basis on which the employment was determined to be suitable;
- U. Documentation of closure.

120.2.00 INFORMATION

120.2.01 It is allowable to delete case notes only in the following circumstances:

- A. Entering notes into the wrong case;
- B. Incorrect wording or inaccurate information; or
- C. Deletion of empty case notes.

All of these items may be deleted within five (5) days of creation. Items must be deleted by the individual who created the original note.

122.0.00 COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS

Effective Date: October 1, 2002

Authority: 34 CFR 361.53, 34 CFR 361.61

O.C.G.A. 49-9-13

122.1.00 POLICY:

122.1.01 Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation service to an individual, the counselor shall determine whether comparable services and benefits are available, unless such a determination would interrupt or significantly delay a planned service or cause extreme medical risk to the individual.

A. The progress of the individual toward achieving the competitive integrated employment outcome identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in a significant way; or

B. An immediate job placement; or

C. The provision of a necessary service to an individual at extreme medical risk. Refer to 122.1.02

122.1.02 If comparable services and benefits exist under any other program, but are not available to the individual at the time needed to satisfy the vocational rehabilitation objectives in the individual's IPE, VR may authorize the services needed until the comparable services and benefits become available. If a comparable benefit for a service is made available to a client in-state, but the client chooses not to accept the benefit or chooses to participate in services out of state, VR support for that service will be limited to the same level of support VR would have provided had the client accepted the benefit and/or remained in-state.

122.1.03 Prior to the authorization of VR funds, the counselor shall have written documentation in the case file from the program whose comparable services and benefits are being sought that the client has applied for any comparable services and benefits appropriate to their vocational rehabilitation program. Any comparable services and benefits that are determined available to the individual, shall be utilized and so documented in the case file. All applicable comparable benefits for which the client has been approved must be subtracted from VR's maximum allowed fees.

- 122.1.04 The following services do not require that the client apply for comparable services and benefits:
- A. Assessment for determining eligibility and identifying vocational rehabilitation needs;
  - B. Vocational counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice;
  - C. Referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies;
  - D. Job related services including job search and placement, job retention services, placement follow-up services, and follow-along services;
  - E. Assistive work technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices;
  - F. Information and Referral services to secure needed vocational services.
- 122.1.05 If an exempted service is known to be readily available from an alternative source at the time that services is needed to accomplish a rehabilitation objective in the consumer's IPE, the counselor must use that source.
- 122.1.06 Comparable services and benefits to be utilized in a client's program shall be listed on the IPE. Should a comparable benefit develop after IPE development, a case note entry shall be made and the benefit fully utilized.
- 122.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 122.2.01 A comparable service or benefit is defined as any comparable service or benefit available under any other program which can be utilized to meet, in whole or part, the cost of vocational rehabilitation services.
- 122.2.02 Extreme medical risk is defined as a risk of substantially increasing functional impairment or risk of death if medical services are not provided expeditiously.

- 122.2.03 Immediate Job Placement - Justification of the delay in an immediate job placement shall be documented in the case notes and the case staffed with the supervisor.
- 122.2.04 While not a comparable benefit, a client sometimes has personal and/or family resources which can be used to pay a portion of the cost of their vocational rehabilitation program. The counselor has the responsibility for utilizing these resources when available.
- 122.2.05 The following list contains examples of comparable services and benefits. This is not intended to be all-inclusive.

A. Training

1. Veterans Administration (VA) - Funds available for training. Limited to eligible veterans.
2. Workforce Development System Programs
3. Financial Aid - Funds available for post-secondary training (technical and academic). Fund types include HOPE, PELL, SEOG, grants, non-merit scholarships and merit scholarships, if applicable.
4. Workers' Compensation - Funds available in some situations for On the Job Training (OJT), adjustment and post-secondary training.

B. Restoration

1. Medicaid (Including the Independent Care Waiver) - Funds available for certain medical, medically related and disability related expenses.

NOTE: VR funds cannot be used to supplement Medicaid. Refer to Expenditure of Funds/Medical Services at 126.1.02 NOTE.

2. Medicare - Funds available for certain medical and medically related purchases.
3. Client's Private Insurance - Funds available for certain medical and medically related purchases.

### C. Support

1. Worker's Compensation - Funds available for certain support services. Limited to clients involved in a joint VR/Workers' Compensation program approved by the insurance carrier.
2. Food Stamps - Funds available to certain clients for the purchase of food as a maintenance service.

### D. Self-employment

1. Self-employment training, business consultation and business plan development consultation through the Small Business Administration and/or Small Business Development Center.
2. Financial funding for business loans.

122.2.06 In addition to the comparable services and benefits listed above, there are often resources available locally which should be utilized in the client's vocational rehabilitation program. It is the responsibility of the counselor to seek out locally available services and benefits and to assure their utilization.

124.0.00 EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS/GENERAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018

124.1.00 POLICY:

124.1.01 Prior to authorizing a service, the counselor shall ensure that the service is appropriate, reasonable and provided in the most cost effective manner.

124.1.02 A written authorization shall be issued either before, or at the same time as, the beginning date of the service. When the A&I and invoice are returned for payment, such authorizations shall be processed for payment within a maximum of thirty (30) days in compliance with state law. In any emergency situation in which verbal authorization is given, a written authorization shall be forwarded on the same date the verbal authorization is given.

- 124.1.03 Any purchased service for an applicant/client shall be encumbered and paid utilizing VR's authorization and invoice (A&I) process. The service begin date must be within forty-five (45) business days of the effective date of the written authorization. No service shall be authorized (encumbered) for more than six (6) months duration unless approved by VR Leadership or their authorized representatives.
- 124.1.04 An authorization shall comply with VR's approved schedule of fees, when such fee is published. Fees must be reasonable and shall be based on market prices for comparable services, Medicaid fees or state public post- secondary school fee schedules for post-secondary training. Requests for fee overrides or exceptions shall be made directly to the Office of Provider Management. As appropriate, the Office of Provider Management will review and base approval on the needs of the client and all applicable federal or state laws and regulations. (Refer to Glossary: Market Price)
- 124.1.05 An authorization shall be made only to a VR approved provider except in instances involving acute conditions and intercurrent illness when an approved provider is not available. Refer to 430.0.00
- 124.1.06 The counselor shall assist the client with informed choice in selecting a provider for a service.
- 124.1.07 The case history shall contain a justification for any authorization (A&I) which duplicates a previously obtained report or service even if the former is obtained at no cost.
- 124.1.08 VR shall not pay bills incurred by an individual for which the Program has not issued a prior written authorization.
- 124.1.09 VR shall not approve payment nor make payment for any service until appropriate written documentation has been received that demonstrates the service was provided to the individual.
- A. A bill for service rendered is not in most situations sufficient evidence that a service was provided. Additional evidence may be required such as a report of evaluation, a report of treatment, receipts, time sheet, progress report, client signature, etc.

B. Exceptions:

1. Rent, meals and other forms of maintenance;
2. Recovery residence not to exceed 1 month in advance;
3. Tuition & Fees at educational institutions;
4. Certifications, examinations and boards when required prior to testing;
5. Transportation not to exceed:
  - a. The appropriate number of trips for a month on public transportation, e.g., MARTA card; or
  - b. One round trip for distances greater than 50 miles, e.g., travel to out of state school; or
  - c. The appropriate number of trips for a month for an individual requiring regular travel or furnishing their own transportation to receive a primary service, e.g., commuting to technical school, doctor, etc.
6. Medical records if required prior to release.

- 124.1.10 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case that moves into Service status or above following the effective closing date of a priority category when the classification of the case puts it in a closed priority category. Refer to 218.0.00
- 124.1.11 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case in Referral status.
- 124.1.12 No VR funds beyond those necessary for diagnosis and assessment shall be authorized or expended on any case in which physical and/or mental restoration or training services are anticipated unless and until the clinical status of the disability, as indicated by the prognosis of the specialist's examination, is stable or slowly progressive. Refer to 214.1.03 and 428.0.00



- 124.1.13 Prior to authorizing a service, the counselor shall ensure the service is both appropriate (Refer to 124.2.01) and reasonable (Refer to 124.2.02). When a client has requested service(s) which the counselor has denied, the client shall be notified in accordance with policy 136.0.00, and documentation to include rationale for the decision shall be placed in the case notes.

NOTE: As an agent of the state, a counselor must exercise prudence in the authorization of any service.

- 124.1.14 The assigned counselor shall sign and date an A & I to authorize a service. If the counselor is unavailable to sign the A & I, a supervisor, member of VR Leadership, or another counselor may sign the A & I or the counselor may designate another staff member to sign the A & I. Such designation may be made either verbally or in writing as follows:

- A. If such designation is made verbally by the counselor, the staff member signing the A & I shall immediately document the case notes to show that the A & I was executed at the verbal instruction of the assigned counselor. The counselor shall then, at the first opportunity, document the case record to confirm that the A & I was executed at the counselor's express instruction. If anyone other than the assigned counselor does sign an A & I, that person shall sign their actual name rather than signing the counselor's name and initialing the signature.
- B. If the counselor wishes to give advance written permission for another staff member other than a supervisor or another counselor to execute an A&I in their absence, the counselor shall document the following information in the case record or on the VR form entitled "Request for Creating an A&I":
  - 1. The name of the person to whom permission is being given;
  - 2. The service which is to be authorized; and
  - 3. The duration for which the service is to be authorized.
- C. Blanket verbal authorizations are not acceptable; individual cases in which someone other than the assigned counselor, a supervisor or another counselor is issuing A/Is should be appropriately documented. The counselor is always ultimately responsible for case service expenditures and

a designee should be used only when necessary.

- 124.1.15 VR staff shall recover overpayments that have been made by the organization which are more than a client is eligible for and is received by, or on behalf of, that client. An overpayment includes, but is not limited to, a payment made that should not have been made, a payment for an ineligible client, any payment for an ineligible service(s), any duplicate payment, a payment for service(s) not received, or a payment for excess service(s).
- 124.1.16 If a client receives an overpayment for any service (s), the client must immediately refund VR, agree to a payment plan or agree to have future payments adjusted to deduct the overpayment. The client shall reimburse VR when the following circumstances apply:
- A. The client receives financial assistance from comparable benefits for services already paid for by VR;
  - B. The client has not utilized VR funds for the purpose they were intended.
- 124.1.17 The client shall reimburse VR per the following VR reimbursement procedures:
- A. The client shall pay the full amount of required reimbursement; or
  - B. The client shall have the amount deducted from the next authorization(s) until the balance has been paid in full.
- 124.1.18 If the client refuses to refund VR, services shall be suspended, and/or the case may be closed for fraud/misuse of Program funds. Refer to 518.1.02H
- 124.1.19 Should VR funds become nearly depleted or otherwise unavailable a determination regarding the closure of a Priority Category (ies) shall immediately be made by the Executive Director. Upon closure of a priority category, all cases in the closed Priority Category that have begun services on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) shall continue to receive services. IPE amendments are allowed for the continuation and/or provision of new services and/or a change in employment goal for these cases. Should all Priority Categories be closed, diagnostic and assessment services for the

purpose of determining eligibility and assigning a Priority Category must also continue to be provided.

124.2.00 INFORMATION:

124.2.01 “Appropriate”, as used in this policy is defined to mean the service is not only desired, but is also necessary for the client to reach their employment goal. Refer to the Glossary: Appropriate

124.2.02 “Reasonableness” may be judged by one or more of the following factors.

A. Is the cost of the service(s) extravagant in terms of employment goal?

B. Is the cost of the service(s) beneficial in terms of employment goal?

C. What is the work expectancy of the client if the service is provided?

D. Is the cost of the service(s) for the client outweighed by the monetary constraints of VR?

E. Is there a strong positive prognosis for employment success?

F. Are there any social, vocational, educational and/or environmental circumstances identified which will negatively impact a successful competitive integrated employment outcome of the individual. Refer to Glossary: Reasonable

126.0.00 EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS/MEDICAL SERVICES

Effective Date: October 1, 2002

126.1.00 POLICY:

126.1.01 VR shall authorize and make payment for medical services only to licensed medical providers.

126.1.02 The individual with a disability shall be allowed to choose the medical provider of their choice from among those approved licensed providers qualified in the diagnosis and treatment of their impairment(s) who are available in the

immediate locality if they are not eligible for service(s) from a comparable benefit source.

NOTE: If the individual is eligible for Medicaid, no VR funds may be used to supplement Medicaid.

- 126.1.03 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case that moves into Service status or above following the effective closing date of a priority category when the classification of the case puts it in a closed priority category. Refer to 218.0.00
- 126.1.04 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case in Referral, Wait List, or Services Interrupted status.
- 126.1.05 Service(s) authorized to a specific licensed medical provider must be provided by that individual professional. A report of service(s) rendered should indicate the person authorized to provide the service actually provided same.
- 126.1.06 VR shall not authorize payment for medical/psychological evaluations or treatment until a report has been received from the provider.
- 126.1.07 The counselor shall use the appropriate Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Code when issuing an authorization for a medical procedure.
- 126.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 126.2.01 For information regarding appropriate medical providers, contact the Office of Provider Management.
- 128.0.00 EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS/IMPREST ACCOUNT  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018
- 128.1.00 POLICY:
- 128.1.01 VR offices and/or facilities of the Program may request the establishment and use of imprest fund accounts.

- 128.1.02 Funds from the imprest account may be expended when economic need has been established and when each of the following conditions exists:
- A. The client needs the service immediately; and
  - B. The service requires immediate payment if delivered.
- 128.1.03 All imprest accounts shall be operated in accordance with VR's Client Services Policy Manual, the Program's "Imprest Account Operation Manual" and VR's Office of General Accounting.
- 128.1.04 The following payment requirements shall apply:
- A. Only one check shall be issued in an amount not to exceed \$350.00 for any single service except for payment of rent.
  - B. The amount allowed for one month of rent, which is also paid by one check, shall not exceed the monthly income amount allowed under Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for a single individual.
  - C. The imprest account shall only be used to pay rent when it has been verified that there is not sufficient time to make either the landlord or the client a vendor, and to pay through the regular A&I process.
  - D. Any requests for exceptions over the above established limits for special circumstances other than rent require approval by VR Leadership. This approval shall be documented in the case file, attached to the A&I and a notification of the exception submitted to the policy unit for tracking purposes.
  - E. Services provided through the imprest account shall be purchased for only a short period of time, not to exceed sixty (60) days. If the service will be needed over an extended period, regular A&I procedures shall be followed (i.e. a vendor number shall be obtained and agreement sought from the vendor to receive a payment through A&I, rather than through the impress account).
  - F. No check written from the Imprest Account shall exceed the current balance in the account at that time.

NOTE: To meet the specific operational needs of the Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center, the imprest account maintained at the Center shall be exempt from the financial and time limit restrictions included in this cite. All other policies and procedures in 128.0.00 shall apply.

- 128.1.05 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case in Service status or above following the effective closing date of a priority category when the classification of the case puts it in a closed priority category. Refer to 218.0.00
- 128.1.06 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case in Referral, Wait List, or Services Interrupted status.
- 128.1.07 The same individual cannot complete authorizations and approvals on the imprest account and issue payment by an imprest check. All imprest authorizations are signed by the account custodian. Refer to the Imprest Account Responsibilities/Duties Chart contained in the Imprest Account Operation Manual for a listing of staff responsibilities, required signatures and account payment procedures.
- 128.1.08 Checks shall be kept in a safe, secured area accessible only to those persons so authorized.
- 128.1.09 An airline ticket may be purchased through the imprest account if this is the most cost effective means and the client requires immediate travel. Refer to 494.0.00
- 128.1.10 No check from any imprest account shall be made payable to a VR employee.
- 128.1.11 No imprest account check shall be made payable to cash.
- 128.1.12 At no time shall an incomplete or blank check be signed.
- 128.1.13 VR Leadership, with approval of Executive Director, can authorize the opening, changing or closing of an imprest account. The VR Office of General Accounting has final authorization over cancellation of an imprest account.

- 128.1.14 Under no circumstances shall the custodian or counselor put any personal money into the imprest bank account.
- 128.1.15 Deposits to an imprest account may be made only from a check from VR's Office of Financial Services made payable to the specific account. One exception to this rule is when a client submits a refund to the account. Refunds shall be paid in the form of cash, money order or a cashier's check.
- 128.1.16 No personal money shall be used for expenditures for clients.
- 128.1.17 There shall be no personal use of the imprest account by the custodian or anyone else.
- 128.1.18 Each imprest account shall have a Plan of Operation in accordance with the Imprest Account Operation Manual.
- 128.1.19 The client's signature is required on the A&I for an imprest check in certain situations, as outlined in VR's Imprest Account Operation Manual.
- 128.1.20 If the counselor is aware that a client has used imprest monies for reasons other than those agreed upon, then the counselor shall request in writing a refund from the client. The written request should state the A & I number, the reason(s) the imprest check was issued, the amount and the counselor's understanding of how the money was misspent. A written copy of this reimbursement request shall be placed in the client's file and regional management shall be consulted as to the continuation of services for this client.
- 128.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 128.2.01 The imprest account has been established as a means of providing counselors with a source of funds that is immediately available for client services. These funds are to be used only when the conditions of 128.1.02 A and B are met.
- 130.0.00 LIEN RIGHTS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Authority: O.C.G.A. 49-9-14
- 130.1.00 POLICY:

- 130.1.01 VR shall claim reimbursement for the cost of services authorized and rendered whenever legal action awards a client money as settlement or judgment (or partial settlement or judgment) of a case brought as a result of an action which resulted in the impairment.
- 130.1.02 The lien right action shall in not affect the basic eligibility of an individual for VR Program services.
- 130.1.03 At no time shall any employee of VR other than VR Leadership/designee negotiate or accept in settlement of the Program's lien(s) an amount less than the total amount of the outstanding lien(s). Only VR Leadership/designee may sign a settlement agreement.
- 130.1.04 Before VR service(s) are provided to an individual with a disability involved in litigation for damages or when it is learned an individual is involved in litigation for damages which resulted in their impairment, the counselor shall make the individual aware of this lien policy. The individual shall be requested to sign a lien acknowledgment form and instructed to keep the counselor advised of the status of all damage claims. An individual's refusal to cooperate in no way affects the validity of VR's claim or lien.
- 130.1.05 When the counselor learns that the individual with a disability is possibly entitled to recover damages for injury which has resulted in the impairment, and a dollar value for vocational rehabilitation services provided to date can be totaled, the counselor shall immediately complete and sign the Lien Claim form. The counselor shall then consult with the legal services officer of VR to ensure that the lien claim form is properly executed. The counselor shall promptly file it with the clerk of the Superior Court of the county where the individual lives. The counselor shall obtain a stamped copy of the form from the clerk after the filing. The form must be filed in the county of the individual's residence. Filing it in any other county or court will make the lien invalid. Since there may be other liens, the form shall be filed as promptly as possible. The counselor shall consult with his or her supervisor for the proper procedure to pay any filing costs.
- 130.1.06 Within one (1) day after filing the form, the counselor must mail a copy of it to the individual with a disability, their legal representative and to each person, firm or corporation listed on the form as being liable for the claim. The 1 day time limit is statutory and if not met may void the claim. The counselor shall



complete a Mail Certification Form for each person, firm or organization and insert it into the case file.

- 130.1.07 If the case is on-going and services are continuing, the amount on the lien claim form shall be the dollar value of the paid services to date which are properly chargeable. If there is a delay between the filing of the form and the anticipated receipt by the individual of the award, additional lien claim forms marked Supplemental shall be filed exactly as in 130.1.05 and 130.1.06 for the additional value of authorized services paid.
- 130.1.08 Upon learning the individual has won an award, the counselor shall contact the client and their representative promptly and request full reimbursement for services provided as indicated by the lien(s) filed. If the individual does not comply, the matter shall be referred to the legal services officer for legal action to enforce the lien.
- 130.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 130.2.01 The Georgia code gives VR lien rights on causes of action accruing to aid individuals with disabilities (clients) who are being or have been provided services.
- 130.2.02 As an example, an individual is injured in an auto accident and needs medical services. The individual is determined eligible for VR services. The client intends or has started legal action to seek a judgment for injuries received. If VR services are authorized, the counselor shall ask the client to sign a lien form to repay VR in the event they win the case and are awarded a money judgment or agree to a monetary settlement.
- 130.2.03 Forms:
- A. Lien Acknowledge Form;
  - B. Lien Claim Form;
  - C. Verification Form;
  - D. Mail Certification Form.

- 132.0.00 REVIEW/CASE  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001
- 132.1.00 POLICY:
- 132.1.01 The counselor shall formally review a case at intervals indicated on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) within the vocational rehabilitation process.
- 132.1.02 The client and/or their authorized (parent, family member, guardian, advocate, authorized representative) shall be given a clear opportunity to be involved in any formal review of their case.
- 132.1.03 Evidence and results of each formal review shall be placed in the case file.
- 132.1.04 Reviews are required at certain intervals, but may also be requested at any time by the counselor, client, parent, family member, guardian, advocate, or other authorized representative, or referral source.
- 132.1.05 Review of Cases in Trial Work Experience(s) status
- A. A case in Trial Work Experience(s) status shall be assessed at least every ninety (90) days.
  - B. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the results of the provision of services and to ascertain whether a determination of eligibility may be made.
  - C. Documentation shall include the date and results of the assessment.
- 132.1.06 Review of Active Cases. Refer to 310.0.00
- A. A client with whom an IPE has been developed, shall have their IPE reviewed as often as necessary, but at least annually.
  - B. The client or their representative (parent, family member, guardian, advocate, authorized representative) shall be afforded an opportunity to review their IPE to:

1. Determine progress toward objectives;
2. Identify if an objective or service has been completed or deleted; and
3. If necessary, jointly redevelop and agree to its terms.

C. Any revisions or amendments to the IPE resulting from this review shall be incorporated into or affixed to the IPE and shall not take effect until agreed to and signed by the individual or, if appropriate, by a parent, a family member, a guardian, an advocate or an authorized representative of the individual.

D. The results of this review shall be documented using the IPE Amendment and Annual Review form.

132.1.07 Review of cases Closed-Other from Referral and Application status. No review required.

132.1.08 Review of cases closed from Trial Work Experience(s) status or cases Closed-Other because of the ineligibility determination of disability too severe.

A. As required by regulation, the counselor shall schedule a review within twelve (12) months of a case closed for the ineligibility reason of disability too severe (incapable of achieving a competitive integrated employment outcome). If, at the time of review, the individual requests further review, the request shall be honored with another review scheduled within the next twelve (12) months. Reviews will continue to be scheduled at a maximum of twelve (12) -month intervals as long as the individual continues to request them unless the disability is found to have resulted in a rapidly progressive or terminal condition, or the client is no longer available to participate in services in the state.

B. The individual shall be notified that a review of their case is to be conducted and invited to present any new information concerning their situation if they wish to do so.

C. The case file shall be retained for twenty (20) years. This is an exception to the policy of destruction of a case file after being closed for three years. Refer to 116.1.05

- D. Certain facts may justify a statement that the case shall not be scheduled for a review. Some reasons for exclusion include a rapidly progressive or terminal medical condition, a recorded statement by the individual that they have refused services or no longer requests a periodic review; the individual is no longer available to participate in services in the state; or the individual's residence is unknown.
- E. The purpose of this review is to look at any change in conditions and/or review information regarding the assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs.
- F. The results of the review shall be dated and documented in the case file indicating:
  - 1. Case requires no further consideration in conformance with 138.1.08; or
  - 2. Case reopened and accepted for services; or
  - 3. Case reopened and placed in Trial Work Experience(s); or
  - 4. Individual has requested further review; case to be reviewed within twelve (12) months.

134.0.00     TRANSFER/CASE  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018

134.1.00     POLICY:

134.1.01     A case shall be served in the most convenient office for the applicant/client.

134.1.02     A case may be transferred from one counselor to another to facilitate services to the client or to satisfy VR administrative needs.

134.1.03     Prior to the transfer of a case, the case shall be reviewed by the supervisor of the transferring counselor to ensure it is up to date, in good order and prepared for transfer.

- 134.1.04 A case in appeal status should not be transferred.
- 134.1.05 VR shall honor written commitments in a case made by Program staff in keeping with Program policies unless there are justifiable reasons to modify or terminate the services.
- 134.1.06 A case must be accepted by the receiving counselor unless it is mutually agreed through consultation with the counselor and the supervisor that the transfer is inappropriate.
- 134.1.07 Transfer of Single Case  
The transferring counselor shall:
- A. Discuss the case with the receiving counselor prior to transfer;
  - B. Discuss the transfer with the client, inform him/her in writing of the transfer, and provide to the client the receiving counselor's name, address and telephone number;
  - C. Develop a transfer summary. This can be either a letter to the receiving counselor with a copy to the client's file or a summary included on the case history;
  - D. Clear all A & Is prior to transfer, if possible; and
  - E. Ensure that the case file is up to date, including the client's current address, telephone number and directions to the client's home, if available.
- 134.1.08 Mass Transfer of Cases  
VR Leadership shall ensure that in the mass transfer of cases, the following shall be accomplished:
- A. Develop a transfer summary for each case when practical;
  - B. Inform the affected clients in writing of the transfer including the name, address and telephone number of receiving counselor. This may be done by the receiving counselor;

C. Ensure that each case file is up to date including the client's current address, telephone number and directions to the client's home, if available;

D. Consult with receiving counselor as needed.

134.1.09 Any case transferred for any reason other than listed in 134.1.01 shall be approved by the counselor's immediate supervisor.

134.2.00 INFORMATION:

134.2.01 There are circumstances that require the transfer of a case to meet administrative or programmatic needs. For example, when a caseload becomes inactive, cases should be transferred to a new caseload.

136.0.00 DUE PROCESS/GENERAL

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

Authority: Section 102(c) of the Act, 29 U.S.C § 722(c), and implementing regulations

O.C.G.A. § 49-9-11

O.C.G.A. § 50-13-1 et seq.

136.1.00 POLICY:

136.1.01 A reportable individual/applicant/client or authorized representative (individual) must be provided information to make informed choices and information ensuring their due process rights either in writing and/or verbally during the rehabilitation process.

An individual who does not agree with a decision by VR regarding the provision or denial of services, including inaction or failure to act with reasonable promptness, may request review and re-determination of the decision. The request shall be in writing.

Translational, interpretative or reader services shall be arranged at VR's expense, if needed, for an applicant or recipient who is not familiar with the English language.

136.1.02 The Notice of Change Concerning Rehabilitation Services (NOC) form is the official document used by VR to notify individuals of certain decisions and due process rights during the vocational rehabilitation (VR) process. It must include notification of the individual's right to seek mediation and/or review of the Agency's decision through an impartial hearing, and of the availability of resources with the Client Assistance Program (CAP).

The individual shall be notified, using VR's NOC form, of any VR decision that adversely affects the individual. This notice shall include notification of the individual's right to seek mediation and review of the decision through an impartial hearing, and of the availability of resources within the CAP. The written notice shall be supplemented, as necessary, with appropriate alternate modes of communication.

136.1.03 The counselor shall use the NOC form as follows:

- A. At the time the case is assigned or reassigned a priority category under the order of selection. Such notice shall specify whether the client shall be provided services under an open category.
- B. When any VR action adversely affects the individual's participation in the VR process:
  - 1. Suspension, reduction, or termination of a service;
  - 2. Denial of the individual's request for specific service(s);
  - 3. Individual is determined ineligible.
- C. At the time of closure.

136.1.04 VR shall not institute a suspension, reduction, or termination of services during the thirty (30) day period following the issuance of a NOC unless the individual so requests. If the individual requests review of a program decision or action, services being provided at the time the review is requested shall continue without suspension, reduction or termination until the final decision is rendered. This provision shall not apply, and services shall be terminated immediately, when:

- A. The individual has died;
- B. The individual has moved and left no forwarding address;
- C. The individual is receiving a service(s) in a facility and commits a serious infraction of the facility's client code of conduct or a criminal act which results in the facility discharging the client from its program; or
- D. The client or the client's authorized representative has obtained, or is attempting to obtain, service(s) through misrepresentation, fraud or collusion, or the commitment of a criminal act, including but not limited to threat(s) against program staff.

136.1.05 The NOC is not required under the following circumstances:

- A. Individual has died;
- B. Individual's residence is unknown.

The written decision of any administrative review or impartial hearing, and/or any agreement reached in mediation, shall be made a permanent part of the client's case file.

136.1.06 All appeals and request for review must be made in writing.

136.1.07 Upon receipt of a written appeal from an individual, an Informal Administrative Review (IAR) shall be conducted by VR Leadership in the area in which the individual is served, or an impartial designee.

136.1.08 The individual will receive a written decision of the review and a copy will be placed in the file.

136.1.09 Alternative dispute resolution (ADR), including negotiation and mediation, may be used at any point in the appeal process but shall only be attempted with the agreement of all parties.

136.1.10 Mediation shall be conducted by an impartial qualified mediator.



136.1.11 An appeal shall be forwarded to the Office of State Administrative Hearings (OSAH) for impartial hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) if:

- A. The individual is not satisfied with the decision from the IAR;
- B. ADR is not appropriate; or
- C. ADR did not resolve the issue.

The appropriate mode of communication required as a result of a disability should be provided at VR expense, if needed, to enable communication among all parties participating in an impartial hearing. Refer to Glossary: Appropriate Modes of Communication

136.1.12 Notice of Due Process Rights and Procedures

The individual shall be informed in writing and supplemented, as necessary, by appropriate alternate mode(s) of communication of their right to and the procedures by which they may request review of a VR decision, including mediation and/or an impartial hearing, at the following stages in the vocational rehabilitation process:

- A. At application, the applicant shall be provided a copy of the Client Services Handbook.
- B. The counselor shall notify an individual for vocational rehabilitation services under this policy using VR's NOC form when either:
  - 1. The applicant is determined ineligible; or
  - 2. The client is being assigned a priority category under the order of selection. Such notice shall specify whether the client shall be provided services under an open category.
- C. At the development of the trial work experience(s) plan or the IPE, the counselor shall provide the client with a copy of the extended evaluation plan or the IPE and shall explain to the client their right to and procedures by which they may request review.

- D. Any time an IPE is amended, the counselor shall provide the client with a signed copy of the amendment and shall explain to the client their right to and procedures by which they may request review.
- E. In any case whereby reclassification into another priority category under the order of selection alters in any way the services being proposed or provided, the counselor shall notify the individual using VR's NOC form. Refer to 218.0.00
- F. At closure or termination, the counselor shall notify the individual of the closure or termination, of their right to appeal, and of the procedures by which they may file a request for an impartial hearing using VR's NOC form, unless closure or termination occurs for the following reasons:
  - 1. The client has died; or
  - 2. The client's residence is unknown, as indicated by envelope(s) returned by the post office. The envelope(s) shall become a part of the case file. Refer to 502.0.00
- G. When any VR action adversely affects the individual's participation in the vocational rehabilitation program, the individual shall be informed by the counselor using VR's NOC form.

136.1.13 Notice of VR Action and individual Request for Review

- A. The NOC Concerning Rehabilitation Services to an individual shall:
  - 1. State the specific reason(s) for VR's action and shall state the policy/ies or procedural provision(s) relied upon. The reason(s) shall be documented in the applicant's/client's file;
  - 2. Advise the individual of their right to appeal the decision and to whom to appeal the decision (including a name and address);
  - 3. Inform the individual of the availability of the resources of the Client Assistance Program;

4. Be supplemented, as necessary, by appropriate alternate modes of communication;
5. Show the same effective date as the date of the NOC when:
  - a. Newly requested service(s) are being denied;
  - b. Client is being notified initially of their priority category assignment;
  - c. Client is being notified of reclassification into a higher priority category.
6. Show the effective date as thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the NOC when:
  - a. Services(s) are being suspended, reduced or terminated;
  - b. Case is being closed.

136.1.14 The request for review and re-determination must be made in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the NOC and should be directed to the counselor.

1. Promptly forward a copy of the individual's request for an appeal/review, Hearing Request Summary, NOC, if applicable, and appropriate case file documentation to the VR Leadership and the Policy Unit contact.
2. Upon request of the individual, assist the individual to submit any request for a review and/or request for an impartial hearing. The individual must be allowed access to their file in accordance with VR policy on release of confidential information. Refer to cite 112.O.00

- 138.0.00 DUE PROCESS/ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: November 1, 2017
- 138.1.00 POLICY:
- 138.1.01 The administrative review shall be conducted by VR Leadership, or a designee, of the office in which the client is served. The designee shall not be the staff person who made the decision.
- 138.1.02 VR Leadership, or their designee, shall schedule and conduct an administrative review within fifteen (15) calendar days after the date of receipt of the request for review. Prior to completing the administrative review, the reviewer must afford the individual the opportunity to present documentation to support their position.
- 138.1.03 VR Leadership, or their designee, shall render a written decision within five (5) working days from the date the administrative review is conducted.
- 138.1.04 The review may be either a document review of the issue(s) utilizing the case file, a telephone review with the reportable individual/applicant/client (individual), a face-to-face review with the individual and the individual's authorized representative, if applicable, and counselor, or any combination thereof.
- 138.1.05 If the review is to involve a face-to-face review with the individual shall be notified in writing at least five (5) calendar days prior to the review of the time, date, place and the issue(s) to be discussed. VR Leadership, or their designee, may extend the time for the review upon a request from the individual or other parties showing good cause or by mutual written agreement with the individual. The face-to-face administrative review shall include the individual and authorized representative (if applicable) and the counselor. The face-to-face administrative review may also include the supervisor and any other person(s) deemed necessary for an accurate review of the decision. The individual shall have the right to bring witnesses, present evidence and to question or refute any adverse witnesses or evidence. VR Leadership, or their designee, shall have full discretion over the conduct of the review.

- 138.1.06 The administrative review decision shall be provided to the individual, the counselor, and supervisor. A copy of the decision shall be placed in the individual's case file and copies shall be mailed to VR Leadership, or their designee, and the Policy Manager. The decision shall state the policy/ies relied upon and the facts upon which the decision is based, and shall include procedures for continuing with an impartial hearing.
- 140.0.00 DUE PROCESS/ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: November 1, 2017
- 140.1.00 POLICY:
- 140.1.01 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), including informal administrative review, negotiation and mediation, may be used at any point in the appeal process. Refer to Glossary: Negotiation; Mediation
- 140.1.02 A reportable individual/applicant/client (individual) who appeals a VR action shall be informed of the availability of both negotiation and mediation and shall be provided a description of each method.
- 140.1.03 The use of negotiation or mediation shall not be used to delay and individual's access to an impartial hearing.
- 140.1.04 ADR is a voluntary process; neither negotiation nor mediation shall be attempted unless all parties agree to participate in the process.
- 140.1.05 Mediation agreements shall be written and signed by both VR and the individual. Any agreement shall become a permanent part of the individual's client case file.
- 140.1.06 All requests for negotiation and/or mediation shall be forwarded to the Policy Unit.
- 140.1.07 A negotiation may be conducted by the Policy Advisor or VR Leadership. Negotiation should not be used if the client has requested or will request mediation.
- 140.1.08 Mediation shall be conducted by an impartial qualified mediator.

- 140.1.09 The counselor shall contact the Policy Unit to arrange for VR payment for the mediation.
- 142.0.00 DUE PROCESS/IMPARTIAL HEARING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 142.1.00 POLICY:
- 142.1.01 If the reportable individual/applicant/client (individual) is not satisfied with the decision resulting from the administrative review, and mediation is not appropriate, they may request to continue with an impartial hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) of the Office of State Administrative Hearings (OSAH).
- 142.1.02 The request to continue with an impartial hearing shall be directed to VR Leadership, or their designee, with copies to the Policy Unit.
- 142.1.03 The request must be made in writing within ten (10) calendar days from receipt of the administrative review decision.
- 142.1.04 GVRA General Counsel's Office, within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the request from the individual, shall request the impartial hearing process continue by notifying the OSAH.
- 142.1.05 OSAH must schedule and conduct the hearing within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of the original request for the impartial hearing from the individual, unless both parties agree to a specific extension of the time.
- 142.1.06 OSAH must provide notice to the individual, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the hearing, of the time, date and place of the hearing, and of the issue(s) to be considered.
- 142.1.07 The individual or, if appropriate, the authorized representative, shall be afforded an opportunity to present additional evidence, information, and witnesses to the ALJ, to be represented by counsel or other authorized representative, and to examine all witnesses and other relevant sources of information and evidence. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with

the Georgia Administrative Procedure Act, O.C.G.A. 50 13 1 et seq., as modified by 34 CFR 361.57.

NOTE: The individual, their authorized representative, the counselor, supervisor, VR Leadership or designee, Policy Advisor and other appropriate parties may appear at the impartial hearing.

- 142.1.08 The decision of the ALJ shall be based on the evidence of the record, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, with its implementing regulations, the approved state plan, and this policy manual. The decision shall state the law and facts upon which the decision was reached.
- 142.1.09 The written decision shall be rendered within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the impartial hearing. This decision shall be provided to the reportable individual, the applicant's/client's counselor, the VR Attorney, and VR's Policy Manager.
- 142.1.10 The ALJ shall be selected on a random basis from among a pool of qualified ALJs jointly identified by VR and the State Rehabilitation Council.
- 142.1.11 An ALJ who has conducted an impartial hearing regarding the vocational rehabilitation of an individual shall not be eligible to hear any future appeal(s) brought by the same individual.

# **Section 200.0.00**

**REFERRAL  
APPLICATION  
FINANCIAL NEED ASSESSMENT  
PRELIMINARY INFORMATION NEEDED  
FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY  
CONSULTATION  
TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY  
DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY  
ORDER OF SELECTION**



## **SECTION 200.0.00**

### **REFERRAL • APPLICATION • FINANCIAL NEED ASSESSMENT • PRELIMINARY INFORMATION NEEDED FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY • CONSULTATION • TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE • DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY • DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY • ORDER OF SELECTION**

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**SECTION 200**  
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**ELIGIBILITY • CONSULTATION • TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE •**  
**DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY • DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY •**  
**ORDER OF SELECTION**

202.0.00 REFERRAL

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

202.1.00 POLICY:

202.1.01 Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program staff shall ensure that individuals in their community are aware of available VR services and shall seek to provide appropriate services to clients with disabilities in their assigned area. The publicizing of VR shall include:

A. Seeking out persons with disabilities who have impediments to employment,

B. Developing referral sources, and

C. Coordinating with other statewide Workforce Development System partners

204.0.00 APPLICATION

Effective Date: October 1, 2001

204.1.00 POLICY:

204.1.01 An individual for whom the minimum referral information has been obtained shall become an applicant for VR services by signing or placing their witnessed mark (or, as appropriate, a parent, family member, guardian, advocate, or other authorized representative may sign) on either a VR application form or a

common intake application form in a one-stop-center, or has otherwise provided VR with the minimum referral information and has requested vocational rehabilitation services.

- 204.1.02 An individual must be available to participate in their determination of eligibility, comprehensive needs assessment and planned services in the state of Georgia in order to be considered for services from VR. No residency requirement shall be imposed which excludes from services any individual who is present in the state.
- 204.1.03 At the time of application, staff shall determine if the applicant is requesting, or is in need of, an appropriate alternate mode of communication. If such a mode of communication is necessary, this need shall be indicated on the application. Refer to 102.0.00
- 204.1.04 An application from a former client of VR whose case was closed for reasons of ineligibility shall not be accepted unless there is reason to believe an appreciable change in the individual's case has occurred which may now make him/her eligible.
- 204.1.05 An application from an individual who is an inpatient of a hospital may be accepted. VR staff shall ensure the applicant is notified in writing that VR shall not pay for the current hospitalization and associated physician expenses.
- 204.1.06 An individual who is not a U.S. citizen, with an alleged disability and has the right to work may apply for services.
- 204.1.07 An individual applicant who is not a U.S. citizen must provide the appropriate employment authorization document as identified on Form I-9 by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) prior to a determination of eligibility.
- 204.1.08 Civil employees of the U.S. Government and American Indians may apply for and receive vocational rehabilitation services from VR under the same terms and conditions applied to other individuals with disabilities.
- 204.1.09 At the time of application, the individual shall be provided, in an appropriate mode of communication, VR's Client Services Handbook. This information must include written information about their right to, and procedures by which,

they may file a request for a fair hearing and redetermination of the Program's action. The Client Services Handbook shall also contain the written descriptions of options for the development of individualized plan for employment including:

- A. The availability of assistance to the client with regard to the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and related forms;
- B. Description of the full range of components that shall be included in an IPE;
- C. An explanation of the full range of components that shall be included in an IPE;
- D. Information regarding the client's rights to due process;
- E. Information regarding the Client Assistance Program (CAP); and
- F. The availability to the individual of any additional information that he or she requests or that VR determines to be necessary.

204.1.10 If a former client's application is accepted and information from the closed case file is appropriate for inclusion in the new case file, copies of the information shall be made and placed in the new file. A closed case file shall never be made a part of a new case file nor should information be removed from it.

204.1.11 If an applicant's case was closed within the last 12 months for the reason of misrepresentation, fraud, collusion or criminal act, the counselor shall accept the application, as necessary, but shall immediately notify the client that the case will be closed if restitution has not been made to the Program. Refer to 518.1.02H

204.2.00 INFORMATION:

204.2.01 An alien may have authorization to work in the United States. The authorization will vary depending upon why and how the person entered the country. Many authorizations are temporary. There are three types of employment authorizations:

- A. A work visa obtained from the person's native country;

B. An Employment Authorization Document; and

C. The “Green Card”.

The “Green Card” and the Employment Authorization Document are issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. If an applicant is an alien, the individual’s permit to work must be carefully reviewed. If the applicant does not have a “Green Card”, provision of services may not be appropriate. An employment authorization is not evidence of U.S. citizenship or permanent residence. It is not valid if altered, and may be revoked. It is valid for a specific period of time which is stated on the front of the card.

204.2.02 Although it is not required for VR to have the consent of a parent or legal guardian to provide service(s) to an individual who is a minor or otherwise under the care of another person, good practice dictates, as appropriate, such consent be obtained in the form of a signature on VR forms.

204.2.03 The age of legal majority in Georgia is 18 years; until that age, all persons are minors.

204.2.04 Guardian:

A. Unless otherwise provided by law, if both parents are alive, either parent is the natural guardian of a minor child. If a parent is dead or if the parents are legally separated or divorced, the parent having custody of the child is the natural guardian;

B. In general, a person is presumed not to be incapacitated (see O.C.G.A. 29-5-7(c)), despite developmental disabilities or mental or physical impairment, unless they have actually been adjudicated so by a probate judge. In order for a parent or another individual to become the legal guardian of an adult, that person or parent must be appointed by order of a probate judge. This order of appointment of guardianship only arises after a formal legal process involving the filing of a petition, notice, professional evaluations, and a hearing have occurred;

C. At times, staff of VR may be told by a parent of an adult that they are the “legal guardian” of the individual. They may want to act on behalf of the

individual, and thus deny the individual the opportunity to fully participate in the vocational rehabilitation process. If legal guardianship is in question, one may call the office of the probate court of the appropriate county for verification. Appointment of a legal guardian is a matter of public record;

D. If an adult agrees in writing to have a parent represent him/her, then the VR Program shall honor this request.

206.0.00 FINANCIAL NEED ASSESSMENT  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018  
Authority: 34 CFR 361.54; O.C.G.A. 49-9-9

206.1.00 POLICY:

206.1.01 Financial need criteria shall be applied in each case where VR funds are to be utilized, except when an individual has been determined eligible for Social Security benefits under Titles II or XVI of the Social Security Act or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or when receiving the following services:

- A. Assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services except those non-assessment services that are provided to an individual participating in trial work experiences; Refer to 214.0.00 and 218.0.00
- B. Assessment for determining the competitive integrated employment outcome and vocational rehabilitation service needs to be included in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). If appropriate, this may include an assessment by personnel skilled in assistive work technology; Refer to 302.0.00
- C. Vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice; Refer to 410.0.00
- D. Referral and other services necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system, and to advise those individuals about client assistance programs; Refer to 418.0.00

- E. Job-related services such as job search and placement assistance, job-retention services, placement follow-up, follow-along services, job coaching and on the job training (OJT); Refer to 420.0.00, 424.0.00 and 426.0.00
- F. Supported and Customized Employment; Refer to 416.0.00
- G. Personal assistance services for daily living activities when provided with other services leading to a competitive integrated employment outcome; Refer to 480.0.00
- H. Any auxiliary aid or service that an individual with a disability requires to effectively receive and communicate information in order to participate in the VR program such as reader services, interpreter services, alternate formats; Refer to 470.0.00 and 476.0.00
- I. Adjustment services including but not limited to community adjustment, work adjustment, work readiness, and adjustment to disability services such as orientation and mobility, technology access training, auditory training and cognitive rehabilitation therapy; Refer to 404.0.00, 452.0.00, 476.0.00, 436.0.00, 440.0.00
- J. Vocational training provided at a Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency residential rehabilitation program (Warm Springs and Cave Spring).

- 206.1.02 Support Services are subject to the same financial need assessment determination as the primary service(s) they support unless they are specifically exempt from financial consideration.
- 206.1.03 The Financial Need Assessment form shall be completed in each case. All financial resources of the individual must be considered in completing the Financial Need Assessment form. The form shall be used to project the individual's financial circumstances over the next fifty-two (52) week period.
- 206.1.04 In completing the Financial Need Assessment form, the counselor shall ask the individual to supply their previous year's federal tax return and their parents, if appropriate. Other written documentation, e.g. payroll receipts, benefit records, etc., maybe required as support for their claimed economic circumstances. Vocational rehabilitation services requiring the meeting of

financial need criteria shall not be provided until the individual has been determined to meet these criteria.

- 206.1.05      Until a client reaches the age of twenty-four (24), the income and/or resources of the client's parents or guardians shall be included in the financial need assessment unless the individual meets one of the following criteria:
- A. The client has independently maintained a household for the previous three months and meets the glossary definition for "self-supporting". Refer to Glossary: Self-Supporting
  - B. The client's custodial parent is incarcerated or whereabouts of parent is unknown.
  - C. The client is a veteran, or a member of the armed forces,
  - D. The client is documented to be an orphan or has no adoptive parents, or is a ward of the court or was a ward of the court until the age of 18, or the client is an emancipated minor.
  - E. This client is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
  - F. The client has been determined to be an "independent" student by the financial administrator of a post-secondary institution.
- 206.1.06      The financial need assessment of an individual shall be reviewed annually and at any time the counselor becomes aware of a change in the individual's economic circumstances which might affect the individual's financial need (including an award of SSI/SSDI/TANF benefits). If the client fails to continue to meet the financial need criteria for paid services, while services are in progress, only those services already authorized for payment and initiated in the IPE and/or any approved amendments shall be provided. No additional authorizations for payment for the service(s) shall be made. If a client is in an academic (college/university) or vocational training program, services already initiated will be continued through the current quarter or semester. When a new case is opened, financial need must be re-established.



206.1.07 The counselor shall complete either section I or II of the Financial Need Assessment form in consultation with the client. Instructions for completing the Financial Need Assessment form:

Dependent on another person: If the individual is dependent on another person whose income is being counted in the income section, then mark yes.

- A. Number of members in a family unit: This is the number of family members who are financially dependent on one another. Tax returns may be used to verify dependent relationships.
- B. Certification of receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF): The individual shall be considered categorically to meet financial need criteria if they are a current recipient of SSI, SSDI and /or TANF. The counselor must, however, complete the certification at the bottom of the form.
- C. Income: This section includes gross income anticipated during the next fifty-two (52) week period. Student financial aid, e.g., HOPE, PELL, SEOG, scholarships, student loans, etc. are not counted as income when determining financial need. Parental or guardian income for a client who has reached twenty-four (24) years of age or who meets the exception criteria in cite 206.1.05 shall not be counted when determining financial need.
- D. VR Cost Sharing Chart: The Cost Sharing Chart is determined by the VR Allowance Table for Financial Need both of which are found in Appendix C. The client's participation in the cost of services is based on the amount of income over the VR Allowance. Dependent on this amount, the client will be expected to contribute a percentage of the family unit income up to a maximum amount. The allowance table is computed to be at 150% of the Federal Poverty Level and will be reviewed and/or revised to reflect any changes at the beginning of the state's fiscal year.
- E. Disability related expenses: In this section, the counselor may list any client disability related expenses that are being paid by the client or by anyone counted for financial need assessment. The counselor may request verification of the amount(s) and confirmation of payment(s). Disability

related expenses which are included as a part of financial need assessment and, by virtue of their inclusion, cause the financial need criteria to be met may not later be authorized and paid by the Program. Allowable disability related expenses are deducted from the individual's total resources when calculating financial need.

NOTE: The disability related expenses can only be expenses related to the client's disability. Disability related expenses may be considered when they are being paid by the client or by anyone counted for financial need assessment. Future planned/projected expenses may not be included. Past expenses may be included only when they have been financed and payments are being paid routinely and regularly. These expenses may be counted only as they relate to the primary and/or secondary impairment(s) used to establish eligibility.

- F. Client certification: The individual or, as appropriate, their parent or guardian, must sign and date the form in the appropriate place certifying the truth of the information which appears at the top portion of the form.
- G. Certification of financial need: The counselor must certify on the form the individual whose name appears as a part of the certification is within the established limit for the provision of paid vocational rehabilitation services. A copy shall be given to the client.

- 206.1.08 Individual circumstances may occur wherein rigid adherence to the financial needs policy detailed above would seriously jeopardize an individual's opportunity to achieve appropriate rehabilitation objectives. In such instance the counselor, in consultation with the supervisor, may elect to seek an exception to the applicable policy.
- 206.1.09 If an individual fails to meet the financial need criteria for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program to purchase all planned services, the counselor shall then determine the appropriate level of the client's participation in the cost of services. The counselor should encourage the individual to utilize their personal assets to purchase certain needed vocational rehabilitation services as indicated in the IPE. VR shall not accept liability for a client's financial responsibility.
- 206.2.00 INFORMATION:

- 206.2.01 Income includes money, wages and salaries before any deductions; net receipts from non-farm/self-employment (receipts from a person's own unincorporated business, professional enterprise, or partnership, after deductions for business expenses); net receipts from farm self-employment (receipts from a farm which one operates as an owner, renter, or sharecropper, after deductions for farm operating expenses); regular payments from Social Security, IRA(s), railroad retirement, unemployment compensation, strike benefits from union funds, workers' compensation, veterans' payments, public assistance (including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income emergency assistance money payments, and non-federally funded general assistance of general relief money payments), and training stipends; alimony, child support, and military family allotments or other regular support from an absent family member; private pensions, government employee pensions (including military retirement pay), and regular insurance or annuity payments, dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, periodic receipts from estates or trust, and net gambling or lottery winnings.
- 206.2.02 By definition, an emancipated minor is a person under age eighteen (18) years of age who is totally self-supporting and is not claimed on the last year's tax return of another individual. Refer to Glossary: Self-Supporting
- 208.0.00 PRELIMINARY INFORMATION NEEDED FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
- 208.1.00 POLICY:
- 208.1.01 Any applicant for vocational rehabilitation services shall be afforded the opportunity of a preliminary review for eligibility determination through diagnostic and/or assessment services which establishes:
- A. Whether the applicant meets the definition of an individual with a disability in that they:
1. Have a physical or mental impairment, which for that individual, constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and

- 2. Can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
  - B. Whether the individual requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment.
- 208.1.02 VR generally accepts as an impairment any medically determinable condition which meets all requirements of the first basic criterion of eligibility (Refer to 214.1.03) if:
- A. The diagnosis is medically or psychologically recognized as a physical or mental impairment;
  - B. Documentation of the impairment is from an acceptable source, i.e. a specialist in the appropriate field (Refer to 602.1.03);
  - C. Documentation of the impairment, regardless of age, reflects the current level of functioning of the individual;
  - D. The diagnosed condition is not specifically excluded by VR as being considered a recognizable impairment. Refer to 602.1.01D
- 208.1.03 In order to facilitate timely decisions regarding eligibility, the counselor shall first determine if there is an existing source of timely and adequate information to establish the presence of a medically determinable impairment.
- 208.1.04 If it is determined that such information is not available, the counselor shall obtain such evaluations as necessary or required by VR policy for them to make a decision concerning the nature, severity, and impact of the impairment.
- 208.1.05 The counselor and other VR staff shall obtain only such information, reports, evaluations, recommendations and/or assessments as are necessary to complete a preliminary review for determining eligibility.
- 208.1.06 The preliminary review shall include:
- A. A review of existing data;

- B. Assessment of work readiness; and
- C. To the extent additional data is necessary and appropriate for each individual case,
  - 1. An appraisal of the applicant's health status; and/or
  - 2. Medical, and/or psychological evaluations which include documentation of the individual's disability (ies).

208.2.00 INFORMATION:

208.2.01 Existing information includes but is not to be limited to:

- A. Social Security award letter; Refer to 214.1.05
- B. Medical information provided by the Disability Adjudication Section (DAS);
- C. School psychological;
- D. Medical documentation by other agencies indicating the existence of an impairment(s). Such agencies include:
  - 1. Workers' compensation programs;
  - 2. County public health offices;
  - 3. Veterans' Administration;
  - 4. Vocational Rehabilitation Agency;
  - 5. United States military;
  - 6. Employers' or other insurance companies' assessments regarding medical benefits or medical retirement;
  - 7. Other rehabilitation service providers.
- E. Medical, hospital, or psychologist's records;

F. Counselor's observation of the following impairments:

1. Amputation(s);
2. Burns(s);
3. Facial Deformity;
4. Obesity;
5. Visual Disorder.

G. Helen Keller National Center and Birth Defects Centers.

210.0.00 CONSULTATION

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

210.1.00 POLICY:

210.1.01 If documentation is unclear, contradictory, or insufficient the counselor may obtain a consultation from the physician/psychologist/medical professional who completed the original report, the current treating physician/psychologist/medical professional the regional medical/psychological consultant or another appropriate source for clarification and updating.

The counselor shall utilize consultation at any time it may be beneficial to facilitate the timely progression of the vocational rehabilitation process.

210.1.02 Consultation may be with an appropriate specialist and/or VR consultant, other professionals including assistive work technology providers, supported employment specialists, the individual and their family, referral source, and other individuals.

210.1.03 The counselor or other VR staff shall utilize the services of an appropriate consultant at any time guidance is needed to facilitate the timely progression of the vocational rehabilitation process.

- 210.1.04 If documentation is unclear, contradictory, or insufficient the counselor may obtain a consultation from the physician/psychologist/medical professional who completed the original report, the current treating physician/psychologist/medical professional the regional medical/psychological consultant or another appropriate source for clarification and updating. A written record of all consultations shall be maintained in the case file. If the consultant writes a report, it must be signed and dated.
- 210.1.05 If a counselor needs additional information or if guidelines indicate that a medical or psychological report does not reflect the applicant's current condition, the physician who completed the original report or the current treating physician or psychologist may be used as a consultant for clarification and updating, as appropriate. When consultation of this nature is obtained, policy 210.1.04 shall be followed.
- 210.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 210.2.01 Consultation is recognized by VR as a method by which VR staff obtain information to assist in individual assessment for determination of eligibility, vocational rehabilitation needs, the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development, and case progress.
- 210.2.02 Face-to-face consultation is preferable. Telephone consultation may be utilized when personal contact is impractical. Either type of consultation must be followed-up in writing to conform with policy 210.1.04.
- 212.0.00 TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE  
Effective Date: July 1, 2017
- 212.1.00 POLICY:
- 212.1.01 A case shall be placed in trial work experience when it is documented by the counselor that provision of trial work experiences are necessary for the limited purpose of determining an applicant's abilities, capabilities, and capacities to perform in work situations consistent with their informed choice and shall include competitive integrated work experiences where appropriate supports and training are provided.

- 212.1.02 If for medical or psychological reasons an individual cannot participate in trial work experience(s), the individual's ability to work should be assessed utilizing all available medical or psychological assessments, evaluations and any other pertinent documentation.
- 212.1.03 A trial work experience plan must be developed with the applicant and shall include only those services necessary to make the eligibility determination.
- 212.1.04 A trial work experience must:
- A. Be sufficiently varied and over a sufficient period of time (up to 6 months) to determine eligibility or ineligibility;
  - B. Be approved by the assigned supervisor (document in case notes);
  - C. Include support services such as assistive work technology, personal assistance, etc. which must be funded by vocational rehabilitation at no cost to the client. Maintenance (transportation, clothing, etc.) may be provided as needed; and
  - D. At a minimum, be reviewed with the client after completion of each trial work experience to evaluate the client's capacity to perform the work.
- 214.0.00 DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
- 214.1.00 POLICY:
- 214.1.01 The determination of eligibility shall be conducted as the first step of the two step process of qualifying for services.
- 214.1.02 Within sixty (60) days of acceptance of an application for vocational rehabilitation services, the counselor shall certify in writing that the applicant has or has not met the basic eligibility criteria, unless:
- A. Exceptional and unforeseen circumstances exist and the applicant agrees to an extension of the 60 day determination period; or



- B. The use of trial work experiences is required to determine the applicant's capability to benefit from services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Refer to 212.0.00

214.1.03 The basic eligibility criteria are:

- A. The applicant has a physical or mental impairment.
- B. The impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.
- C. The individual with a disability requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment.
- D. It is presumed that an applicant who meets the eligibility criteria above can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome.

214.1.04 It shall be presumed that an individual can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome, unless it can be demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that they are incapable of benefiting from such services through the use of trial work experiences or, in those limited instances when the individual cannot participate in trial work experiences, through the use of other evaluative means.

214.1.05 An individual who has already been determined to be eligible for SSI or SSDI shall be:

- A. Considered to be an individual with a significant disability; and
- B. Presumed to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services provided that the individual intends to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the counselor or other staff providing intake services to inform the individual through its application process that individuals who receive services under the vocational rehabilitation program must intend to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome. The

applicant's completion of the application process for vocational rehabilitation services is sufficient evidence of the individual's intent to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome, and no additional demonstration on the part of the applicant is required.

- 214.1.06 Individuals determined presumptively eligible shall receive benefits planning. See Glossary: Benefits Planning
- 214.1.07 The eligibility requirements shall be applied without regard to the particular service needs or the anticipated cost of services required by the applicant.
- 214.1.08 An eligibility determination must be made within sixty (60) days unless exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of VR preclude making an eligibility determination within that timeframe and the applicant and counselor agree to a specific extension of time as documented and justified in the case file. The applicant and counselor shall sign an Agreement for Extension of the 60-Day Time Frame for Determining Eligibility.
- 214.1.09 When it has been determined by the counselor that an applicant meets the basic eligibility criteria, the counselor shall certify in writing that the individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services from the VR Program.
- 214.1.10 The determination shall be:
- A. Captioned "Determination of Eligibility"; and
  - B. Signed and dated by the counselor.
- 214.1.11 The determination shall contain the following statements using the individual's name:
- A. For individuals receiving SSI or SSDI: "(individual's name) is a recipient of SSI or SSDI and has expressed an intent to work. They are presumptively eligible for vocational rehabilitation services; therefore, it is presumed that they meet the definition of an individual with a disability. It is also presumed that they require services to (state all that apply):
1. Prepare for;

2. Secure;
3. Retain;
4. Advance in;
5. Regain employment; or

B. For individuals not receiving SSI or SSDI:

1. (Individual's name) meets the definition of an individual with a disability;
2. They require vocational rehabilitation services to (state all that apply):
  - a) Prepare for;
  - b) Secure;
  - c) Retain;
  - d) Advance in; or
  - e) Regain employment; and
3. (Individual's name) is, therefore, determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

214.2.00 INFORMATION:

214.2.01 An individual with a disability is defined as an individual who has a physical or mental impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment, and who can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome.

216.0.00 DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY

Effective Date: October 1, 2001

Revised Date: May 15, 2018

- 216.1.01 When it has been determined by the counselor that an individual does not meet one of the basic eligibility criteria (Refer to 214.1.03), the counselor shall certify in writing that the individual is not eligible for vocational rehabilitation services from the VR Program.
- 216.1.02 A case may be closed for an ineligibility reason only after full consultation with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's parent, family member, guardian, advocate or authorized representative, or after giving a clear opportunity, as documented in the case file, for this consultation.
- 216.1.03 An ineligibility decision based on the severity of an individual's disability shall only be made after it has been demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the individual is incapable of benefiting from services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Such clear and convincing evidence shall be based on the results of trial work experiences, except in those limited circumstances when an individual cannot take advantage of such experiences, or when options for trial work experiences have been exhausted before the counselor can make a determination of eligibility. In these limited circumstances, other evaluative means must have been provided prior to such an ineligibility decision.
- 216.1.04 The basic eligibility criteria (Refer to 214.1.03) must be continuously applied. It is possible for an individual found eligible to become ineligible at some future time due to changing conditions. In this event, the case shall be closed. Refer to 518.1.01C
- 216.1.05 The Determination of Ineligibility shall be so captioned and shall include a statement citing the specific reason for the ineligibility decision. Any determination of ineligibility after plan completion shall utilize the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) Amendment for Determination of Ineligibility form which shall also include the reason(s) for the decision. The form shall be signed by the client or their authorized representative and the

counselor. Refer to 310.1.02E

- 216.1.06 The determination shall include the justification for the ineligibility decision which must be consistent with the specific reason identified on the closure statement.
- 216.1.07 The reason and justification for the ineligibility decision shall be consistent with VR Program policy and case file documentation.
- 216.1.08 The case file shall document that the individual or their authorized representative, as appropriate, had the opportunity to discuss the ineligibility decision with the counselor.
- 216.1.09 The Determination of Ineligibility shall be signed and dated by the counselor.
- 216.1.10 Each individual determined to be ineligible shall be notified of the decision in conformance with Due Process unless the case is Closed-Other from Referral status. Refer to 136.0.00
- 216.1.11 An individual whose case is closed from trial work experience(s) for a reason of ineligibility due to inability to benefit from services shall be referred, as appropriate, to an independent living program. The individual shall also be referred to other training or employment-related programs that are part of the one-stop service delivery system under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- 216.1.12 An ineligibility decision in a case of inability to benefit from services must be reviewed within twelve (12) months and thereafter, if such a review is requested by the individual, or, if appropriate, by the individual's representative. Refer to 132.1.08
- 218.0.00 ORDER OF SELECTION  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001  
Revised Date: January 13, 2021  
Authority: 34 CFR 361.36
- 218.1.00 POLICY:

- 218.1.01 The order of selection shall be imposed when it has been determined by the GVRA Executive Director that services cannot be provided to all persons who apply and who are determined to be eligible for services.
- 218.1.02 The order of selection priority category placement is the second step in the two-step process of qualifying individuals for services. Refer to 214.0.00
- 218.1.03 After eligibility has been determined and before the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is written, each applicant is assigned to a priority category. The applicant will be assigned to the highest priority category for which they are qualified and a rationale will be documented in the case file. If the applicant's circumstances change or new information is acquired, the category designation can be changed to a higher priority category. Category designation changes will not be made if the change would place the individual in a lower priority category.
- Upon assignment of a priority category under the program's order of selection, a Notice of Change form shall be issued to the client stating the assigned priority category and specifying whether the client shall be provided services under an open category. (Refer to 136.1.13B2)
- 218.1.04 If a client is in a closed priority category, or if the client's assigned priority category is closed prior to the initiation of planned services, the client shall be offered to be placed on the wait list and/or referral services.
- 218.1.05 The order of selection shall in no way regulate the provision or authorization of diagnostic and evaluation services. In the event that all Priority Categories are closed, assessment services for the determination of eligibility and assignment of a priority category must continue to be provided. However, no VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case that moves into Service status or above following the effective closing date of a priority category when the classification of the case puts it in a closed priority category.
- 218.1.06 Cases in Service status or above for which IPE services have begun may not be disrupted as a result of the closing of a priority category. Clients actively participating in IPE services shall continue to receive IPE services. IPE amendments are allowed for the continuation or provision of new services and/or an employment goal change.

218.1.07 Order of Selection Categories:

A. Priority Category 1 (Individual with a Most Significant Disability): An eligible individual shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by VR to be an individual who has:

1. limitations in 3 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
2. requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time

B. Priority Category 2 (Individual with a Significant Disability): An eligible individual shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by VR to be an individual who has/is:

1. limitations in 1 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
2. requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time; or

C. Priority Category 3 (Individual with a Disability): All other eligible individuals.

218.2.00 INFORMATION:

218.2.01 Only services that are necessary, as a direct result of the disability, to reduce the impact of limitations on a functional capacity as it relates to a competitive integrated employment outcome are included in the determination of OOS categories.

218.2.02 Impairment means any physical or mental condition which, for an individual, seriously limits functional capacity(ies), i.e. mobility, communication, work skills, work tolerance, self-care, self-direction, and interpersonal skills, in terms of employability and which can be expected to impose a lasting reduction in function regardless of medical or psychological intervention.

218.2.03 Extended period of time means at least three (3) months.

218.2.04 Individuals who are receiving SSI and SSDI benefits as a result of having been determined to be disabled or blind are considered to be at least “individuals with significant disabilities” and should be evaluated to determine whether they meet the State’s criteria for “individuals with the most significant disabilities.” There is no statutory authority for assigning a special priority category for individuals receiving SSI and SSDI benefits or for selecting these individuals before other individuals with most significant or significant disabilities.

An individual receiving SSI/SSDI is presumptively eligible. If you are assessing for Determination of Eligibility, you must continue this process even if they are Presumptively Eligible. Individuals should be assigned to the highest category for which they qualify.



**300.0.00**

**COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
RELATED FACTOR  
EMPLOYMENT GOAL  
INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR  
EMPLOYMENT  
INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR  
EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT AND  
ANNUAL REVIEW**

**SECTION 300.0.00**  
**COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT • RELATED FACTOR • EMPLOYMENT**  
**GOAL • INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT • INDIVIDUALIZED**  
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**SECTION 300**  
**COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT • RELATED FACTOR • EMPLOYMENT**  
**GOAL • INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT • INDIVIDUALIZED**  
**PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT**  
**AND ANNUAL REVIEW**

302.0.00      COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

302.1.00      POLICY:

302.1.01      As soon as a determination has been made that a person with a disability is eligible for services and assigned to an open priority category, a comprehensive needs assessment shall be conducted as part of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development process. The purpose of the comprehensive needs assessment is to determine the employment goal, objectives, and the nature and scope of vocational rehabilitation services to be included in the IPE. No monetary limits based solely on the anticipated cost of the services shall be imposed. However, services must be both appropriate and reasonable. Refer to Glossary: Appropriate, Reasonable Refer to 124.2.01 and 124.2.02

302.1.02      The vocational comprehensive needs assessment shall address the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice, and the client's medical prognosis. The assessment may include, as appropriate in each case:

- A. An initial review of existing data gathered during the referral, application and qualifying process, which may be sufficient in some cases to develop the IPE; and/or
- B. Additional assessments and/or evaluations when existing information has been determined to be insufficient.

302.1.03      All assessments shall be used by the counselor and client to jointly identify goals, objectives and services that need to be included in the IPE.

302.1.04      When appropriate, assistive work technology services shall be provided, to the extent necessary, to assess the potential for developing the capacities of the

individual to perform in the work environment. This may include a work site assessment. If appropriate, this assessment shall be provided by personnel skilled in assistive work technology.

- 302.1.05 When appropriate, support services may be provided, to the extent necessary, to enable the client to access planned assessment services in settings away from normal care supports.
- 302.1.06 To the maximum extent possible and appropriate, and in accordance with confidentiality requirements, the counselor shall ensure that the person with a disability (and/or, if indicated, a parent, family member, advocate, or other authorized representative) is able to make informed choices concerning the selection and identification of appropriate services and providers of such services throughout the vocational rehabilitation process. To ensure the inclusion of informed choice, the client, and/or their representative, shall be provided, in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication, with the information regarding the individual's options for developing an IPE. Such options include the availability of professional and technical counseling and assistance, the information regarding the order of selection and other pertinent financial considerations, a description of due process and the client assistance program and any other information the eligible individual requests or VR determines to be necessary.
- 302.1.07 If supported employment services are identified as needed by the person with a disability, an assessment of the need for supported employment services shall be completed prior to inclusion on the IPE. Employment shall be in the most integrated setting possible, consistent with the informed choice of the individual. Appraisal for supported employment and assistive work technology may consist of consultation with other staff, including the assistive work technology team members. Refer to Glossary: Supported Employment
- 302.1.08 If the person with a disability is receiving services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a copy of the IEP shall be obtained by the counselor. Relevant elements of the IEP shall be used in the comprehensive needs assessment process.
- 302.2.00 INFORMATION:

- 302.2.01 The emphasis of the comprehensive needs assessment is on understanding the client and their natural supports. Efforts should be made to identify who is the selected supports with the client and the counselor so that meaningful partnerships can be established. Families and natural supports are important factors to be considered. Open communication with the client and their natural supports is vital to understanding the client's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice.
- 304.0.00 RELATED FACTOR  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 304.1.00 POLICY:
- 304.1.01 Services may be provided to an eligible individual in order to correct or improve, as appropriate and reasonable, related factors that have been documented and determined to have a significant and direct negative impact on the successful vocational participation of the individual. Refer to Glossary: Related Factor
- 306.0.00 EMPLOYMENT GOAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018
- 306.1.00 POLICY:
- 306.1.01 An employment goal shall be established with the client prior to or simultaneously with the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), and the selection of the goal shall incorporate the informed choice of the client. In all cases, the primary emphasis of the vocational rehabilitation program shall be the client's achievement of an employment goal consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice into a competitive integrated employment environment.
- 306.1.02 The employment goal shall be identified as a specific job title listed in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET).
- 306.1.03 The employment goal shall be stated on the IPE with a brief explanation, consistent with the file documentation, regarding the appropriateness of the

employment goal considering the unique strengths, resources, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice of the individual.

- 306.1.04 If there is a change in the employment goal, a plan amendment is required. Refer to 310.1.02A
- 306.1.05 If the employment goal involves supported employment, the counselor shall follow the special instructions contained in policy 416.0.00.
- 306.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 306.2.01 In some instances, the employment goal may not be established while the client is participating in trial work experience(s).
- 308.0.00 INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
- 308.1.00 POLICY:
- 308.1.01 An Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be developed, agreed upon, and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, that individual's authorized representative and the counselor as soon as possible, but not later than ninety (90) days after the date of determination of eligibility, unless the counselor and the eligible individual agree to the extension of that deadline and to a specific date by which the IPE must be completed. This agreement must be documented, justified in the case file, and the eligible individual and counselor must sign an Agreement for Extension of the 90-Day Time Frame for Development of the Individualized Plan for Employment.
- 308.1.02 The IPE shall be designed to assist the individual in achieving an employment goal that is consistent with his or her unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.
- 308.1.03 The IPE shall be developed and implemented in a manner that affords the eligible client the opportunity to exercise informed choice in the selection of:  
A competitive integrated employment outcome;
- A. The specific vocational services to be provided under the IPE;

- B. The providers of the vocational rehabilitation services; and
- C. The means or methods that will be used to procure the services.

- 308.1.04 Prior to the development of an IPE, the client or their authorized representative, shall be provided, in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication, information related to the development of their IPE. Refer to 204.1.09
- 308.1.05 Prior to the completion of the IPE, the counselor shall staff high cost and unusual plans with the supervisor.
- 308.1.06 A copy of the IPE, all amendments, and appropriate attachments shall be provided to the client or their authorized representative in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication. The original document and all appropriate amendments and attachments shall be retained in the case file.
- 308.1.07 The eligible individual or their representative and the counselor shall review the IPE as often as necessary, but at least annually.
- 308.1.08 For a qualified student in a secondary school, the IPE must be developed and signed before the student transitions from school to the community.
- 308.1.09 Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) content:
  - A. An IPE shall be developed, using the Individualized Plan for Employment form. This plan shall set forth the details of the vocational rehabilitation program that will assist the client in achieving their vocational rehabilitation employment goal.
  - B. Each IPE shall have an employment goal. The employment goal may be identified as an occupational division, an occupational grouping, or a specific job title.
  - C. Certain special conditions apply for IPEs which contain particular types of employment goals or services:

1. For an IPE in which supported employment services are to be provided, the plan shall not exceed twenty-four (24) months in duration, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been jointly established and justified in the case file. An IPE for supported employment shall:
  - a) Specify the supported employment services to be provided by VR;
  - b) Specify the expected extended services needed (which may include natural supports);
  - c) Identify the source of extended services or, should specific identification not be possible, describe how extended services are to be made available;
  - d) Provide for periodic monitoring to ensure that the individual is making satisfactory progress toward meeting the weekly work requirement established on the IPE;
  - e) Provide for any appropriate coordination of services with other state or federal programs;
  - f) Identify any job skills training that will be provided on site;
  - g) Include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual with the most significant disability.

D. Objectives:

Every IPE shall have, at a minimum, the objective of an employment outcome, with the intent that such employment is to occur, to the greatest extent possible, in an integrated setting. The IPE may also include additional, intermediate objectives that support the achievement of the employment goal.

1. The objective(s) shall only address and be consistent with the capacities and related factors identified as area(s) needing improvement.



2. It is possible for one objective to address more than one capacity or related factor identified as area(s) needing improvement.
3. If more space is needed to record all of the objectives, additional sheets may be attached to the Individualized Plan for Employment form. Such attachments shall be clearly designated as part of the original IPE.

E. Services:

The IPE shall include the service(s) necessary to complete each plan objective, including, as appropriate, assistive work technology services. The service(s) shall be provided in the most integrated setting that is appropriate.

1. Services shall address only the capacities and related factors identified as areas needing improvement.
2. For each service listed, the provider of the service and the method used to procure the service shall be specified.
3. For each service listed, the funding source for that service shall be specified.
4. Each service must be dated with the projected dates for starting and ending the service.

F. Client Responsibility:

1. For each objective, the client's responsibilities for the realization of that objective shall be stated. Client responsibilities may be expressed in terms of:
  - a) Certain behavioral conditions which the client agrees to meet;
  - b) Assumption of some or all of the financial responsibility for that objective; and/or
  - c) Application for and receipt of comparable benefits.

2. The counselor shall ensure that client responsibilities are stated from the client's point of view, in terms the client understands.

G. Review of Objective:

1. The IPE objective(s) shall be reviewed regularly to evaluate the client's progress toward achieving the stated objective(s.) The results of the review(s) shall be documented by the counselor in the case file.
2. The time frame for the review of each objective shall be established considering the nature of the objective and the services that are being provided to assist the individual with a disability to reach that objective.

H. Evaluation Criteria:

1. The interim evaluation criteria for each objective are expressed on the IPE in terms of how the client will measure his or her progress toward that objective.
2. The full completion of each objective will be expressed on the IPE in terms of what conditions will have been satisfied by the client for the objective to be considered as having been met.

I. Estimated date of completion:

Each IPE shall show an estimated date for the successful completion of the employment plan, i.e. all services have been completed and the client has worked successfully for at least ninety (90) days.

J. Special IPE considerations:

1. For an IPE that has been developed with a qualified high school student, it must acknowledge, on the appropriate place on the employment plan, whether the client is receiving services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If so, the counselor shall include a copy or summary of the IEP in the client's file.
2. The provision of supported employment services (or lack thereof) shall be indicated on the IPE. If supported employment services are planned,

the counselor shall indicate on the employment plan how extended services are to be made available.

K. Client Comments:

Verification of informed choice shall be documented on the IPE by:

1. Client's written comments of involvement; or
2. The client's initials at the statement on the IPE form.

- L. The counselor and the client and/or authorized representative, shall sign and date the plan. Services shall not be initiated until the counselor approves and signs the IPE. A copy shall be given to the client and the original shall be retained in the client's file.

310.0.00 INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT AND ANNUAL REVIEW

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: May 15, 2018

310.1.00 POLICY:

310.1.01 The IPE shall be revised, as needed, using an Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review Form. An IPE amendment shall be developed using the same options available for developing the IPE. All requirements for the IPE apply to the IPE amendment(s). Refer to 308.0.00

310.1.02 The Individualized Plan for Employment must be amended to:

- A. Change the employment goal;
- B. Add or remove an objective;
- C. Add or remove a service;
- D. Record an ineligibility decision, as required by federal regulations, for a client for whom an IPE has been developed and has been found to be

incapable of achieving a vocational outcome (i.e. the client's disability has been found to be too severe). Such an ineligibility decision shall be recorded on the special IPE amendment form entitled "Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment for Determination of Ineligibility". Refer to 216.1.05

- 310.1.03 Any revisions or amendments to the program shall not take effect until agreed to and signed by the individual with a disability or, as appropriate, the client's authorized representative, and the counselor.
- 310.1.04 A copy of all amendments and appropriate attachments shall be provided to the client or, as appropriate, his or her authorized representative, using an appropriate alternative mode of communication when necessary. The original document shall remain in the case file.
- 310.1.05 Additions:
- A. To add an objective:
1. Indicate the new objective with sequential numbering on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form;
  2. Give the date and an explanation for the addition in the case notes; Refer to 308.1.09D
  3. Show the client's responsibilities; Refer to 308.1.09F and
  4. The counselor and client or, as appropriate, parent, family member, guardian, advocate or authorized representative, shall sign and date the form.
- B. To add a service:
1. Indicate the objective by citing the objective number in the appropriate space on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form and the new service(s) to which it relates on the form;

2. Give an explanation for the addition in the case notes; Refer to 308.1.09D
3. Show the client's responsibilities; Refer to 308.1.09F
4. The counselor and client, or as appropriate, parent, family member, guardian, advocate or authorized representative shall sign and date the form.

**310.1.06**      **Removals:**

**A. To remove an objective:**

1. Identify the objective to be removed by citing the objective number in the appropriate space on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form;
2. Give an explanation for the removal on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form;
3. Show the client's responsibilities; Refer to 308.1.09F
4. The counselor and client or, as appropriate, parent, family member, guardian, advocate or authorized representative, shall sign and date the form.

**B. To remove a service:**

1. Indicate the objective by citing the objective number in the appropriate space on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form and identify the service to be removed;
2. Give an explanation for the removal in the case notes; Refer to 308.1.09D
3. The counselor and client or, as appropriate, parent, family member, guardian, advocate or authorized representative, shall sign and date the form.

310.1.07 Change in employment goal:

- A. Indicate the change in the appropriate place on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form.
- B. The new employment goal shall be stated on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form with a brief explanation, consistent with case file documentation, regarding the appropriateness of the employment goal, considering the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of the individual.

310.1.08 Client Comments:

Verification of informed choice shall be documented on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form by:

- A. Client's written comments of involvement; or
- B. The client's initials at the statement on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form.

310.1.09 Signature:

The counselor and client or, as appropriate, the client's authorized representative, shall sign and date the form.

310.1.10 Annual Review of Individualized Plan for Employment:

- A. A client, with whom an IPE has been developed, shall have their IPE reviewed as often as necessary, but at least annually;
- B. The client or their representative (a parent, a family member, a guardian, other advocate or an authorized representative) shall be afforded an opportunity to review their IPE to:
  - 1. Determine progress toward objectives;
  - 2. Identify if an objective or service has been completed or deleted; and

3. If necessary, jointly redevelop and agree to its terms.
- C. The client's statement, or as appropriate, in the words of a parent, a guardian, a family member, an advocate or an authorized representative may appear in the appropriate place on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form;
- D. Documentation on the Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form shall include the date and results of the review;
- E. The counselor and client or, as appropriate, parent, family member, guardian, advocate or other authorized representative, shall sign and date the form;
- F. A copy of each program review, in accessible format to the maximum extent possible, shall be given to the client after it has been signed and dated. The original shall be retained in the case file.

**310.1.11 Review of Trial Work Experience(s):**

A client participating in trial work experiences to determine their ability to work in a competitive integrated employment environment shall be reviewed at a minimum of every ninety (90) days to determine the results of the provision of services and to ascertain whether a determination of eligibility may be made. Such assessments shall be documented in writing in the case history. The Individualized Plan for Employment Amendment and Annual Review form(s) are not used to document these reviews. Refer to 212.0.00

# **Section 400.0.00**

## **Services**



**SECTION 400.0.00**  
**SERVICES**  
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## **SECTION 400 SERVICES**

- 402.0.00 SERVICES/GENERAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001
- 402.1.00 POLICY:
- 402.1.01 VR may provide those services necessary to assist an individual with a disability in meeting the entry-level requirements of the client's employment goal. Refer to Glossary: Primary Services and Supportive Services.
- 402.1.02 In order for services to be provided or authorized by VR, such services shall be deemed both appropriate and reasonable. Refer to Glossary: Appropriate and Reasonable and to 124.2.01 and 124.2.02
- 402.1.03 As services are provided by VR, eligibility requirements shall be continually applied. Refer to 214.0.00
- 402.1.04 If services which require that financial need criteria be met are being provided and the client's economic circumstances change causing him/her to no longer meet the financial need criteria, the client shall be notified and financial support for the services discontinued in accordance with policy. Should the client's financial situation change such that they meet financial need criteria, appropriate support for services shall be initiated. Refer to 136.1.02 and 206.1.06
- 402.1.05 Services may be provided only by approved providers and, where applicable, only by providers who have met the provider standards and the standards in the Provider Guidelines Manual. Clients who are approved VR providers may be authorized to provide services as long as there is no apparent conflict of interest and confidentiality needs are addressed. Refer to 110.1.10 and 124.1.05
- 402.1.06 Other purchased services shall not be authorized if the individual refuses approved physical or mental restoration which shall improve their disability except refusal by reason of religious belief or substantial risk.

- 402.1.07 Purchased services provided in Employed status shall be temporary in nature and for the purpose of job stabilization. If the service is not expected to enable the client to be self-sustaining, the service shall not be initiated.
- 402.1.08 All services shall be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate for the individual's needs.
- 402.1.09 In the provision of services, VR shall not assume the legal responsibilities of another entity.
- 402.1.10 Service(s) may be suspended or terminated for clients who fail to comply with policy(ies) and/ or agreed to responsibilities for the provision of the service(s). (Refer to Cite(s): 136.1.02; 136.1.03)
- 402.1.11 Individual's are responsible for planning for the routine maintenance, repair, and replacement of equipment that is customary for work in their chosen profession.
- 404.0.00 COMMUNITY PROGRAM ADJUSTMENT SERVICES TRAINING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 404.1.00 POLICY:
- 404.1.01 VR may authorize or provide adjustment services training for a client for the purpose of developing acceptable behaviors to enter and/or maintain gainful employment.
- 404.1.02 The counselor may authorize adjustment services training when an individual does not exhibit acceptable work, community, interpersonal and/or job readiness behavior for securing and/or maintaining a job.
- 404.1.03 Refer to Expenditure of Funds/General (124.0.00), when it is necessary to authorize funds for service.
- 404.1.04 The community program providing the adjustment services training shall:
- A. Provide a monthly progress report for each Program client receiving adjustment services training, and

B. At the conclusion of services, provide a final report to the counselor.

404.1.05 VR may sponsor Facility Work Adjustment Training, (FWAT), for a client for a period of time that meets the Client's needs, not to exceed one hundred and twenty (120) authorized training days including absences.

404.1.06 If FWAT extends beyond 120 authorized training days, the case must be staffed with the supervisor prior to authorization.

404.2.00 INFORMATION:

404.2.01 Adjustment services training includes:

A. Community Adjustment: Community adjustment covers such areas as money and banking, how to make purchases, types of insurance and transportation.

B. Work Adjustment: Work adjustment is designed to assist the individual in mobilizing energies toward building tolerances and meeting the entry level demands of the competitive labor market through a learning, earning and experiencing process.

C. Work Readiness: Work readiness covers such areas as knowledge of why people work, various occupational requirements, where and how to look for a job, how to complete a job application and interview skills.

406.0.00 SERVICES FOR GROUPS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

406.1.00 POLICY:

406.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for groups of individuals with disabilities. Such services shall be used to provide services that promote integration and competitive integrated employment.

406.1.02 Services for a group of individuals with disabilities may be expected to contribute substantially to the vocational rehabilitation of a group of individuals but does not relate directly to the individualized rehabilitation program of any one individual with a disability.

- 406.1.03 The need for services for groups may be identified at any level within the VR Program or outside the Program.
- A. A service identified at the field level must be approved by VR Leadership who will forward the request to the program director. Exempt from this requirement are services to groups of transitioning students. Refer to 450.0.00
  - B. Services identified at the state office must be approved by VR Leadership.
  - C. VR Leadership shall determine the availability of funding and the impact to the Program's budget.
- 406.1.04 When it has been decided to provide service(s) for groups of individuals, the VR Program fiscal officer shall take the appropriate action to ensure accountability for the cost of the service.
- 406.1.05 When it has been decided to provide service(s) for groups of individuals, VR Leadership shall take the necessary action to ensure the timely implementation of the service.
- 408.0.00 COMMUNITY WORK ADJUSTMENT  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 408.1.00 POLICY:
- 408.1.01 Community Work adjustment takes place at a work site that is integrated into the community. Instruction/feedback is provided by a supervisor to assist the client in developing or re-establishing acceptable work habits and behaviors in order to obtain and/or retain competitive integrated employment.
- 408.1.02 There are two methods for obtaining the service of Community Work Adjustment Training (CWAT) and all applicable policy applies to both:
- A. The Direct CWAT program where VR staff arrange training sites with appropriate jobs, work directly with the employer/trainer, monitor on-site client progress, obtain required documentation, oversee program

requirements and pay the training fee to the employer or directly to the client.

B. The Outsourced CWAT program where approved providers (often Community Rehabilitation Programs), assist with identification of training sites, work directly with the employer/trainer, monitor on-site client progress, obtain required documentation, (which is then submitted to VR), ensure program requirements are being followed and pay the training fee to the employer or directly to the client.

- 408.1.03 VR shall not pay another state agency, organization or institution to provide community work adjustment training unless such payment is approved by the supervisor. Documentation of the approval must be in the case file.
- 408.1.04 VR shall only authorize community work adjustment training and a job coach simultaneously with supervisor approval.
- 408.1.05 CWAT placement of individuals under the age of 18 is restricted to non-hazardous occupations. Refer to Glossary: Hazardous Work Site
- 408.1.06 The counselor shall attempt to establish community work adjustment training at no cost or by utilizing third party funding prior to authorizing an expenditure of VR Program section 110 funds.
- 408.1.07 The client shall be paid no less than minimum wage.
- 408.1.08 CWAT may be provided for a client for up to forty (40) hours per week except when the client is enrolled in secondary education. A client who is enrolled in Secondary educational training shall not be placed in community work adjustment training for more than fifteen (15) hours per week. No payment by VR shall be made for an individual in CWAT beyond 40 hours per week or beyond fifteen hours per week if the individual is enrolled in secondary educational training.

Note: The restriction to 15 hours of CWAT for individuals in secondary educational training does not apply during the time that school is not in session. That is, the individual may participate in CWAT for up to 40 hours per week during the summer break, if such participation is consistent with the individual's rehabilitation needs.

- 408.1.09 VR may pay the client directly or reimburse the employer/trainer an amount equal to the minimum wage per hour for the client/trainee in secondary education up to 15 hours per week for CWAT. For all other CWAT clients, payment to the client or reimbursement to the employer/trainer shall be made at a rate equal to minimum wage up to 40 hours per week. No payment/reimbursement shall be authorized for any time in training or any administrative costs beyond the established limits.
- 408.1.10 VR may sponsor CWAT for a client for a period of time that meets the client's needs, not to exceed the following limits:
- A. For an individual in CWAT twenty (20) hours per week or less, the duration of this training shall be limited to one hundred and twenty (120) authorized training days including absences, unless an extension is approved by the supervisor to meet the individualized needs of the client. Approval by the supervisor must be documented in the case file.
  - B. For an individual in CWAT for more than 20 and up to 40 hours per week, the duration of this training shall be limited to sixty (60) authorized training days including absences, unless an extension is approved by the supervisor to meet the individualized needs of the client. Approval by the supervisor must be documented in the case file.
- 408.1.11 A monthly training progress report shall be obtained from the employer/trainer by the counselor to determine satisfactory progress of the client. The client's completed training hours will be included on this report. The VR Program's Training Progress Report Form should be used to document progress or lack thereof.
- 408.1.12 There shall be documentation in the case file, before the training begins, concerning what is expected of the client/trainee. The client shall sign the CWAT Participant Agreement. When CWAT is provided through the Direct Program, there shall be documentation in the case file of mutual understandings, before the training begins, concerning what is expected of the employer/trainer and VR. The employer shall sign the CWAT Employer Agreement.



- 408.1.13 When CWAT is provided through the Direct Program, VR shall authorize to the employer/trainer or directly to the client a training fee in an amount equal to the minimum wage per hour for the client/trainee. Administrative costs may also be authorized to the employer/trainer at a rate no greater than 15% of the training fee. No authorization by VR shall be made for an individual in CWAT beyond 40 hours per week or beyond 15 hours per week if the individual is enrolled in secondary educational training.
- 408.1.14 When CWAT is provided through the Outsourcing Program, VR shall pay an approved provider the authorized service fee as per their contract or service agreement. The provider shall be responsible to pay the employer/trainer or pay the client directly, an amount equal to the minimum wage per hour. The authorized service fee as per the contract or service agreement covers all payment to the employer or client.
- 408.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 408.2.01 Care must be taken by the counselor to select an appropriate community work adjustment site which contributes to the client's ability to achieve their employment goal.
- 408.2.02 CWAT has the purpose of assisting a client to obtain appropriate work habits. It should not be authorized for periods of time beyond that which is required to achieve this purpose. When authorized for a client who is enrolled in secondary education, the time in community work adjustment training may be designed to conform with a semester; however, the emphasis is on meeting the training needs of the client, not the curriculum needs of the school.
- 410.0.00 COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 410.1.00 POLICY:
- 410.1.01 Counseling and guidance shall be provided for an individual by VR throughout their vocational rehabilitation program of services.
- 410.1.02 Non-planned Counseling and Guidance:

- A. Non-planned counseling and guidance is general in nature and is not reflected on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or IPE amendment and annual review;
- B. The case file may contain documentation of the provision of this service and the outcomes achieved dependent on the counselor's professional discretion.

**410.1.03      Planned Counseling and Guidance:**

- A. Planned counseling and guidance shall be listed on the IPE/plan amendment and annual review as a specific service designed to achieve a stated objective(s) and must address a specific capacity(ies) limited by the impairment(s) and/or related factor(s) identified in the case file;
- B. When planned counseling and guidance is listed as an IPE/plan amendment and annual review service, the case file shall contain documentation of the provision of this service. The language of the documentation must describe any progress or lack of progress toward the accomplishment of the specific behavioral change(s) which is being attempted.

**410.2.00      INFORMATION:**

- 410.2.01      Counseling and guidance is addressed in two categories: non-planned and planned. The provision of either or both, as appropriate, shall meet the intent of the VR Program's policy.**
- 410.2.02      Non-planned counseling and guidance are those activities which take place throughout the rehabilitation process when the counselor is involved in routine information dialogue with the applicant/client, i.e. explaining the vocational rehabilitation program, completing the application, giving directions, reminding of appointments, discussing program progress, making referral to other programs or activities, etc.**

- 412.0.00      EMPLOYMENT: BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Randolph Sheppard Act  
O.C.G.A. 49 9 3 (4) & (5)  
O.C.G.A. 49 9 40 et al
- 412.1.00      POLICY:
- 412.1.01      VR may only provide for the establishment and management of a vending facility under the Randolph Sheppard Act as a small business enterprise.
- 412.1.02      Any vending facility operated by VR shall be subject to the laws, regulations and policies governing the Program's Business Enterprises Program.
- 412.1.03      Referrals for consideration as a vending facility operator are made to the training coordinator of the Business Enterprises Program.
- 412.2.00      INFORMATION:
- 412.2.01      VR is responsible for the development and maintenance of all vending facilities established in the program. Business enterprise personnel shall have control with respect to selection, placement, transfer, financial participation and termination of vendors and the preservation, utilization and disposition of VR assets.
- 412.2.02      The Business Enterprises Program is responsible for establishing and maintaining food service operations on federal, state, county and other public and private locations. The program is a single, state-administered enterprise, with a large number of food service outlets. Persons operating these facilities are vendors or managers who are similar in nature to managers of franchise operations in the fast food industry. The vending facilities belong to VR which in turn licenses the vendors to manage the facilities.
- 414.0.00      EMPLOYMENT: SELF-EMPLOYMENT  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018

- 414.1.00 POLICY:
- 414.1.01 VR may authorize services for a client to meet entry level requirements for an approved self-employment business.
- 414.1.02 Self-employment is a viable business venture initiated and operated by the client where that individual performs, supervises or sub-contracts the product or service to be produced. The business must be wholly owned by the VR client. Self-employment shall be consistent with the consumer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and interests.
- 414.1.03 VR may authorize a supply of expendable stock(s) and/or supplies, including tools and equipment, which are necessary to the attainment of the self-employment business. All authorizations shall be appropriate and reasonable. Refer to 124.2.01 and 124.2.02.
- 414.1.04 Initial stocks and supplies include those items necessary to the establishment of the new business enterprise during the initial establishment period, which may not extend beyond six months. No authorization for any operation costs of the business shall extend beyond six months. Completion of projected start-up expenses and budget for the initial six months of operation shall be done before expenditures on the business are made.
- 414.1.05 The following services may be provided, if required, but are not included in the cost of allowable start-up business expenses:
- A. Training;
  - B. Business plan development;
  - C. Adaptive technology/equipment;
  - D. Disability related modifications.
- 414.1.06 A self-employment business approved for support by VR must be a viable business and expected to make a profit and contribute significantly to the individual's household income. The anticipated outcome is that the business proceeds will be the primary source of income once the business is established.

This expectation shall be assessed and verified prior to approval of the provision of self-employment services.

- 414.1.07 A Self-Employment Review Team, consisting of 3 to 5 members appointed by VR Leadership, shall provide consultation to the counselor regarding potential self-employment cases, assessment of clients and an objective and final review of the business plan with recommendations to the counselor. A Release of Information form shall be obtained from the client prior to discussions with selected supports outside of VR. Refer to 112.0.00.
- 414.1.08 VR may support two levels of self-employment businesses, one level with support up to \$3000 and the second level with support over \$3000 and up to \$10,000. VR Leadership may approve expenditures considered as appropriate and reasonable beyond either of the established levels. This approval shall be documented in the case file.
- 414.1.09 For businesses requiring up to \$3,000 in support, a brief business plan shall be completed by the client for review by VR staff and, when appropriate, the Self-Employment Review Team. Normally a client will already have necessary work skills for the business and may require short term training in areas such as bookkeeping and tax requirements. Some examples of this type of self-employment are: lawn care, pressure washing, carpentry, medical billing, massage therapy and cosmetology.
- 414.1.10 For businesses requiring over \$3,000 and up to \$10,000 in support, a full business plan shall be completed by the client for review by VR staff. The client will be required to work with an approved provider while developing the business plan, and a formal critique of their plan by the provider must be submitted to VR. In addition, the client shall present their business proposal to the Self-Employment Review Team. These businesses often require funding in addition to VR support and the client's contribution. Clients require business management skills in addition to skills required to perform business tasks. For example, a person who is a chef or cook would also require training in managing a business before opening a restaurant.
- 414.1.11 The client shall be responsible for contributing a minimum of 25% of the start-up cost of the business. This contribution shall be either in-kind or financial through provision of actual funding. Examples of in-kind contributions include the individual's providing utilities and property for the business or equipment

they already own. Funding contributions may be obtained through a variety of resources including client's assets, family contributions, grants or loans. Resources that are specific to individuals with disabilities such as PASS Plans, Credit Able, etc...may also be available.

414.1.12 Self-Employment services may be authorized only to VR approved providers based on approved VR fees. An agreement between the VR Program and the provider shall be in place prior to the initiation of any services. Refer to the Provider Guidelines Manual for self-employment provider requirements and payment processes.

414.1.13 Self-Employment Comprehensive Needs Assessment  
The counselor shall utilize an assessment process to assist in determining if self-employment is an appropriate job match as well as to look at the client's needs, strengths, related factors and proposed services. This process shall include:

A. Two phases of formalized assessments specific to self-employment:

1. Phase I is an assessment, by both the client and VR staff, of the individual's capabilities and potential for operating a business. These "entrepreneurial" tests can be administered either via the Internet or in paper form. They consist of the following:
  - a) "Self-Employment Entrepreneurial Career Assessment Form" (available through the Georgia Career Information System); and
  - b) "Entrepreneur Risk Assessment Quiz: Starting Your Own Business" (available through the Small Business Development Centers).

NOTE: Continue with Phase II as determined appropriate based on Phase I findings.

2. Phase II consists of the client's completion of information on the feasibility of their business, as well as monthly personal and living expenses. They consist of the following:
  - a) Business Feasibility Worksheet: The purpose of this worksheet is for the client to provide and clarify business plan details to the VR

counselor and/or Self-Employment Review Team. The 25% client contribution shall be identified at this time; and

- b) Monthly Personal and Living Expenses Worksheet: The purpose of this worksheet is to determine how much income the client must have in order to pay their routine personal and living expenses.

B. Other assessments as appropriate:

C. Consideration of the following:

1. The individual's ability to sustain themselves in the occupation; and
2. The work required; and
3. The likelihood of success; and
4. Available support from approved providers; and
5. The individual's qualifications and/or training and the likelihood of them being successful in any required training; and
6. Any transferable skills; and
7. The local economy.

D. Findings from preliminary labor market information research provided by the Employment Specialist and/or designated VR staff on local business needs and trends.

#### 414.1.14 VR and Provider Collaboration

If the counselor and client agree to continue with the self-employment process following completion of the steps in 414.1.13, referral and coordination shall be initiated by the counselor to an approved provider for the following services:

- A. Training courses on starting and managing a business, business planning, loan opportunities, etc. Training, as appropriate, may be provided as assessment and/or as a planned service;

- B. Business Plan development assistance;
- C. Business Plan written critique with recommendations.

414.1.15 Self-Employment Business Plans

A written business plan is required for all self-employment cases:

- A. A “Brief Business Plan” shall be completed for businesses requiring up to \$3,000 from VR. The “Brief Business Plan” packet shall be submitted to the counselor by the client and consists of the following four (4) documents:
  - 1. Business Feasibility Worksheet;
  - 2. Monthly Personal and Living Expenses Worksheet;
  - 3. Business Operations Start-up Expenses Worksheet; and
  - 4. Projected Monthly Cash Flow Worksheet (12 Months).
- B. A “Full Business Plan” shall be completed for businesses requesting over \$3,000 and up to \$10,000 from VR. The “Full Business Plan” packet shall be submitted to the counselor by the client and consists of the four (4) worksheets listed above in Part A, and the following elements:
  - 1. Description of the Proposed Business: The client shall have a detailed description of how the business will be set up, the products and/or services offered, the business location, who the customers will be and why they will patronize the business;
  - 2. Market Research: The client must demonstrate that they know the market and has expertise in this business. This shall include a discussion of the target, the barriers to entry into the market and the size and location of the market. Facts about local demographics and market research should be presented to support the estimate of potential consumers. All research must be documented and factual;
  - 3. Sales Plans: The client shall discuss their sales plans and methods. This should include pricing strategy, cost/benefit analysis and alternatives.



The advertising plan shall describe the methods to be used to promote the products or services in the target market;

4. Management: The client shall describe their interest and experience in proposed business, including education, work history, personal contacts, skills and knowledge. A description of how the client will manage the company and its operations shall be stated. Also, management supports and related costs shall be given. It is recommended that mentors, advisors and consultants, both formal and informal, be identified as supports for the business;
5. Financial Information and Concise Revenue Projections:
  - a) Revenue projections must show the projected monthly and annualized revenue and operational expenses for three (3) years. The cost of production must be addressed. This includes facility, supplies, salaries, license(s), taxes, insurance, shipping, transportation and utilities. Include the cost per unit;
  - b) There must be a start-up balance sheet, a list of start-up equipment and services and a breakout of what will be provided by the client, by other sources, and by VR;
  - c) Description of the amount currently available for investment, the amount of funding sought and how that money would be used. Loan re-payment must be included in the projected income/expense statements;
  - d) Description of the method of bookkeeping.
6. Competition: The client must identify competitors in their market area. The discussion should include the difference between their product/service and their competitors, as well as why their business would be preferred over the competitors;
7. Risk analysis: An analysis of the risks of the business should be completed; discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the business;

8. Business License: Verify what is required to obtain a business license and that the business will comply with city, county, state, and federal codes and ordinances and that the individual will be eligible to apply and obtain the license;
9. Supporting Documents to be attached when applicable:
  - a) List of identified vendors (may require verification from vendors/suppliers of their participation), which may include bookkeeper, tax consultant, etc.;
  - b) Items requested to be paid by VR and their cost;
  - c) Items and resources that the consumer will contribute to the plan;
  - d) Credit Report;
  - e) A copy of the last two years federal tax return;
  - f) Specifications of products;
  - g) Advertising materials.

414.1.16 Self-Employment Determination  
The counselor shall determine whether or not to support the client in self-employment based on the following:

- A. Comprehensive Needs Assessment Findings; and
- B. Written Business Plan containing all necessary elements; and, when applicable
- C. Provider feedback and Business Critique; and
- D. Regional Self-Employment Review Team recommendations.

414.1.17 Required Steps Following Self-Employment Approval  
The counselor shall ensure that:

- A. The client obtains a business license and/or permits as required to operate the business. VR may authorize the purchase of an initial business license but not renewals; and
- B. The client obtains a lease and/or building permits. If a business property (other than the home) is used, the client shall provide proof of the property availability or lease agreement in the client's name only. VR shall not authorize the deposit, lease, or purchase of any building; and
- C. Any physical modifications to the business property, as recommended by AWT staff, are only those required to make the property accessible to the client. If the client does not own the property, written permission must be obtained from the owner of the property prior to modifying the property. This permission shall be placed in the case file.

**414.1.18 Self-Employment Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) Requirements**  
If the individual is approved for self-employment the following IPE requirements shall be followed:

- A. Self-employment is not an employment goal itself, but a method of achieving competitive integrated employment. The IPE may contain several phases, depending on the needs of the client;
- B. An IPE or IPE Amendment with self-employment as a means to achieve employment may be written only after a Business Plan is approved by the counselor;
- C. The IPE or IPE Amendment including self-employment should encompass a plan to provide the supports, technical assistance and resources necessary to launch, develop, and/or sustain the business;
- D. The IPE or Plan Amendment must include a clear statement of the role and responsibilities of the client, and of the nature and extent of VR support and participation (timelines, dollar amounts, specific goals and services) as well as the types and amounts of the client's investment;
- E. There must be clear criteria for measuring progress, including monthly reports of business income and expenses;

- F. The employment goal shall be consistent with the approved business plan and shall identified as a specific job title listed in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET).

414.1.19 Self-Employment Business Documentation and Case Progress

- A. Once the business has begun operation, follow-up shall occur for a minimum of ninety (90) days to access business gains and future stabilization.
- B. The case may be placed in Employed status after start-up expenditures have been finalized.

NOTE: If tools and equipment are purchased for a client, a Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities Form shall be completed if any item exceeds \$350.00. Refer to 492.0.00 and 493.0.00

- C. The counselor shall verify monthly business income and business expenses through written reports submitted by the client. A business profit results when business income exceeds business expenses.

414.1.20 Employment Outcomes

Self-employment outcomes shall be based on a business profit or a salary the client assigns him/herself from the business.

- A. The case shall be considered successfully rehabilitated after:
  - 1. The client demonstrates their ability to average a business profit or a salary over a period of ninety (90) days; and
  - 2. A Notice of Change shall be issued when this has occurred; and
  - 3. The case shall be closed thirty (30) days subsequent to the issuance of the Notice of Change.
- B. There are two options for self-employment case closure as follows:
  - 1. Case may be closed in competitive integrated employment if the client is averaging a business profit or salary over a ninety (90) day period at a

rate equal to or above minimum wage. This is the anticipated outcome to be reached; or

2. Case may still be closed in competitive integrated employment if client is averaging a business profit or salary over a ninety (90) day period at a rate less than minimum wage. In these cases, the counselor shall ensure that the client's work is progressing satisfactorily and closure is warranted. All criteria found at cites 504.1.01 and 504.1.06 shall be met.

#### 414.1.21 Disallowed Self-Employment Services

A. VR shall not provide funding or be involved in assisting a client's plan for:

1. Businesses that are speculative in nature, such as investments in real estate, etc.
2. Businesses organized as non-profit;
3. Businesses organized as hobbies, i.e., any business that is not organized to make money or a profit;
4. Refinancing of existing debt;
5. Businesses that may violate community morality.

B. VR shall not authorize the following services:

1. Purchase of any type of motorized vehicle used on public roadways, or provision of any transportation support or assistance to get to and from the designated place of business or to render services related to the business. Motorized vehicles may include the following: automobile, truck, van, scooter, airplane, boat, other powered vehicle, or trailer that requires title and/or licensing by the state. Refer to 402.1.11
2. Payment of deposits and continuation of payments for any utilities associated with the self-employment venture such as electricity, gas, telephone, Internet service, water, waste collection, etc.

- 416.0.00      EMPLOYMENT: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT  
Effective Date: November 1, 2017  
Authority: 34 CFR 363
- 416.1.00      POLICY:
- 416.1.01      Supported employment is based on a model of placement followed by extensive job training and on-going supports. It may be authorized for:
- A. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff shall authorize or provide time-limited supported employment services by an approved provider for a client who meets the definition of an individual with a most significant disability.
- B. Supported Employment shall be authorized for:
1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive integrated employment has not traditionally occurred or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a severe disability; and
2. Individuals, who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services in order to enter and retain competitive integrated employment; or
3. Youth with the most significant disabilities that need extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for up to four (4) years or up to their twenty-fifth (25) birthday.
- 416.1.02      Supported Employment services may be authorized only to VR Program approved providers based on approved VR Program fees. An agreement between the VR Program and the provider shall be in place prior to the initiation of any services.
- 416.1.03      The maximum period for Supported Employment services shall be twenty-four (24) months following placement on a supported work site. This time frame can be extended if it is determined and documented on the Individualized Plan for Employment that additional time is necessary in order for the client to achieve job stability prior to transition to extended services.

- 416.1.04 An individual may participate in Supported Employment services if they:
- A. meet all eligibility criteria for VR services;
  - B. meet the requirements for most significantly disabled; and if
  - C. supported employment has been identified as an appropriate rehabilitation objective for the individual and they have a documented need for both ongoing support or extended services in order to work in competitive integrated employment. (Refer to 416.2.01)
- 416.1.05 Determination of Services
- A. The individual's case file shall contain supporting documentation, via a Comprehensive Needs Assessment, which shows that Supported Employment is the appropriate rehabilitation goal and is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of the individual.
  - B. VR Staff shall determine appropriate Supported Employment services in conjunction with the client, the Supported Employment provider and other interested parties.
- 416.1.06 The counselor shall determine the appropriate supported employment model for the individual based on the disability and complexity of support needs. VR recognizes three supported employment models. (Refer to 416.2.02)
- A. Traditional Supported Employment (TSE)
  - B. Customized Supported Employment (CSE)
  - C. Individual Placement and Supports (IPS)
- 416.1.07 Supported Employment Needs Assessment & Services Identification
- A. The counselor shall complete the supported employment needs assessment by:

1. reviewing existing data compiled during the application and the VR eligibility process to include client's interest in working, availability of natural supports and involvement of other agencies or providers;
  2. determining the need for benefits counseling and make appropriate referrals as needed;
  3. determining the need for additional assessments to include assistive work technology;
  4. determining the availability of long-term support funding, to include, but not limited to, funding through the state Developmental Disability agency (state grant & aid, and waiver), state Behavioral Health agency, and Social Security Work Incentives/Employment Networks;
  5. completing the Supported Employment Consumer Information form or reviewing the Career Profile completed by referring IPS Supported Employment provider.
- B. Services identification: The counselor, the client, the Supported Employment provider and any other interested parties shall meet to collaborate on the individual's supported employment needs and services by:
1. reviewing available information obtained in the assessment process, identify the client's interests, strengths, abilities, preferences and support needs;
  2. identifying the job development strategies to be used and responsibilities of each party;
  3. identifying the individual's employment goal preference, extended support needs, natural supports, and preferred hours to work per week;
  4. completing and signing the Supported Employment Services Identification and Agreement form



C. For Customized Supported Employment cases, in addition to a needs assessment, the counselor must utilize the Discovery process to identify the clients appropriate Customized Supported Employment services. The Discovery process consists of the following:

1. Discovery Assessment and Discovery Profile Narrative Report
2. Customized Planning Meeting
3. Visual Resume (if needed)

The Customized Planning Meeting occurs in order to utilize the Discovery Assessment and Discovery Profile Narrative Report to create the customized job development plan. The Supported Employment Services Identification and Agreement Form must be completed at this time.

#### 416.1.08 Supported Employment Work Plan

The Supported Employment work plan must specify all anticipated services to include the provider of such service, duration, funding source and include the following:

1. the maximum hours per week that the client prefers to work;
2. job development/placement strategy to use to include TSE, CSE (job negotiation) or IPS;
3. identification of job skills training (job coaching) needed on/off the work site to include social skills training;
4. provision of scheduled monitoring (ongoing support and follow-up) to ensure that the individual is making satisfactory progress and working preferred hours;
5. identification of the source for extended support services and natural supports;

6. provision of services in addition to supported employment include but are not limited to benefit counseling, assistive work technology, accessibility services, and coordination of services with other federal or state programs.

#### 416.1.09 Supported Employment Job Development/Placement

Appropriate documentation must be obtained reflecting job development/placement activities (Supported Employment Monthly Progress Report). Job development/placement is encumbered, invoiced, and paid to initiate placement services. In the event the client requires a significant job change or job loss occurs, job development/placement may be provided more than once if appropriate and justified by the VR counselor.

For CSE cases, a traditional job development/placement will not be appropriate and the job developer must negotiate a specific job function that will conform to the client's skills, abilities and interest along with meeting the needs of the employer.

#### 416.1.10 Traditional and IPS Supported Employment consists of five phases:

- A. Services Identification: Before the initiation of Supported Employment, the provider, the client, and the VR Staff meet to review the services, strategies and supports needed to facilitate a successful employment outcome. (Refer to 416.2.03)
- B. Job Development/Placement: Job development/placement is provided in order for the client to enter employment. The job development strategy and placement must correspond with the client's interests, work plan, supported employment model and support needs. (Refer to 416.2.04)
- C. Training & Initiation of Ongoing Supports: Intensive job coaching takes place on the job by skilled job trainers to assist the client in new employee orientation, learning the assigned job tasks, implementing needed accommodations, addressing work place behaviors, employer expectations and interpersonal skills. This phase begins on the first day the client is on the employer's payroll and is in training with a job coach. Should job coaching not be required, the provision of ongoing supports must be initiated and documented. (Refer to 416.2.05)

- D. Stabilization: On-going support is provided by the Supported Employment professional once the client has stabilized on the job and/or is no longer requiring intensive job coaching. As a guideline, this occurs in TSE and IPS and job coaching services amount to 20% or less of the individuals total work hours per month and 30% or less in CSE. The Supported Employment professional will provide initial documentation of the Extended Services Plan. (Refer to 416.2.06)
- E. VR Services Completion & Transition to Extended Services: Once the client has met the objectives on the work plan, the supported Employment professional will provide extended services for as long as the individual is employed at this same job. A minimum of two work site visits per month are required unless it is determined that off-site monitoring is more appropriate and/or requested by the individual. Off-site monitoring must consist of at least two face to face meetings with the individual and one employer contact monthly. (Refer to 416.2.07)

416.1.11 Customized Supported Employment consists of seven phases:

- A. Services Identification: Before the initiation of Supported Employment, the provider, the client, and the VR Staff meet to review the services, strategies and supports needed to facilitate a successful employment outcome. (Refer to 416.2.03)
- B. Discovery Assessment and Discovery Profile Narrative Report: In addition to a needs assessment, the counselor must utilize the Discovery process to identify the client's appropriate Customized Supported Employment services (*regardless of other evaluations/ assessments that may have been previously obtained*). The Discovery Profile and Narrative Report is completed by the provider and is the product of the Discovery process and the primary instrument to be used in the Customized Planning Meeting.
- C. Customized Planning Meeting: Information gathered from the discovery process is the foundation for Customized Supported Employment planning. The Customized Supported Employment planning process should result in a blueprint for the job search. The Customized Planning Meeting occurs in order to utilize the Discovery Assessment and Discovery Profile Narrative Report to create the customized job development plan. The customized

Planning Meeting should include the Client, the Client's Support System as appropriate, the Customized Supported Employment Provider and the appropriate VR staff. The CSE Services Agreement form must be completed at this time

- D. Job Development/Placement: Job development/placement is provided in order for the client to enter employment. The job development strategy and placement must correspond with the client's interests, work plan, supported employment model and support needs. (Refer to 416.2.04)
- E. Training & Initiation of Ongoing Supports: Intensive job coaching takes place on the job by skilled job trainers to assist the client in new employee orientation, learning the assigned job tasks, implementing needed accommodations, addressing work place behaviors, employer expectations and interpersonal skills. This phase begins on the first day the client is on the employer's payroll and is in training with a job coach. Should job coaching not be required, the provision of ongoing supports must be initiated and documented. (Refer to 416.2.05)
- F. Stabilization: On-going support is provided by the Supported Employment professional once the client has stabilized on the job and/or is no longer requiring intensive job coaching. As a guideline, this occurs in TSE and IPS and job coaching services amount to 20% or less of the individuals total work hours per month and 30% or less in CSE. The Supported Employment professional will provide initial documentation of the Extended Services Plan. (Refer to 416.2.06)
- G. VR Services Completion & Transition to Extended Services: Once the client has met the objectives on the work plan, the supported Employment professional will provide extended services for as long as the individual is employed at this same job. A minimum of two work site visits per month are required unless it is determined that off-site monitoring is more appropriate and/or requested by the individual. Off-site monitoring must consist of at least two (2) face to face meetings with the individual and one employer contact monthly. (Refer to 416.2.07)

416.1.12      An individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment is in an integrated setting may work on a short term basis towards competitive integrated employment,

Provided the client, counselor, and Supported Employment provider can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment:

1. Within six (6) months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or,
2. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed twelve (12) months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information.

**416.1.13 Employment Outcomes and Program Completion**

A supported employment case shall be closed successfully rehabilitated after the following:

- A. Case has been in Employed status for ninety (90) days or more following stabilization. This consists of thirty (30) or more days following stabilization with the remainder of the ninety (90) days taking place during extended services; and
- B. all parties agree that the VR case can be closed; and
- C. the client has begun receiving benefits that are at least equal to their co-workers who are not disabled and are performing the same or similar work; and
- D. the employment meets the definition of competitive integrated employment.

**416.2.00 Information:**

**416.2.01** Supported Employment is competitive work performed on a full-time or part-time basis; in an integrated work setting that is paid at or above minimum wage, but not less than the customary or usual wage paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. Placement in an enclave or group setting is not considered employment in an integrated setting. Refer to Glossary: Integrated Setting

#### 416.2.02 Supported Employment Models

- A. Traditional Supported Employment (TSE) is used for individuals who qualify for Supported Employment services and are in need of intensive job coaching, ongoing supports and extended supports but are not in need of job carving/job negotiation
- B. Customized Supported Employment (CSE) is used for individuals who have the most significant disabilities, who would not likely benefit from or have been unsuccessful in the past with traditional supported employment and will require individually negotiated employment. CSE emphasizes a person-centered discovery process that leads to competitive integrated employment that was negotiated/carved to best meet the job seeker and employer's needs.
- C. Individual Placement and Supports (IPS) is a specific evidence-based model that was developed for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. This model places an individual into employment as soon as possible, as it is believed that the employment is an essential component of recovery. Supported Employment services are integrated and coordinated with mental health treatment and vocational rehabilitation services.

#### 416.2.03 Services Identification

This service can be encumbered in both Eligible and Services status.

#### 416.2.04 Job Development/Placement

This payment is paid forward, in order to initiate the service.  
Repetition of this Payment is allowed if appropriate and justified by the VR counselor.

#### 416.2.05 Training & Initiation of Ongoing Supports

This payment is paid forward, in order to initiate the service.  
Repetition of this Payment is allowed if appropriate and justified by the VR counselor.

- 416.2.06      Stabilization  
This payment is paid forward, in order to initiate the service.  
Repetition of this Payment is allowed if appropriate and justified by the VR counselor.
- 416.2.07      VR Services Completion & Transition to Extended Services  
Payment cannot be made until thirty (30) days from placement in stabilization.  
Payment also should not be made until Extended Services Plan is received from provider.
- 418.0.00      INFORMATION AND REFERRAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001  
Authority: 34 CFR § 361.37
- 418.1.00      POLICY:
- 418.1.01      Information and referral services shall be provided to applicants, potential applicants and eligible clients who do not qualify for VR services due to the Program's order of selection and to clients who have been determined to be ineligible for VR services due to inability to benefit from services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Information and Referral services are provided to assist such individuals in securing needed services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment.
- 418.1.02      Referral to other federal and state programs, including other statewide workforce development system programs, shall be provided in order to best meet the individual's needs. Such referrals shall be completed using the VR's Information and Referral Form. (All information on the Information and Referral Form must be completed except for the diagnostic information if such information is not appropriate or available.)
- 418.1.03      A copy of the completed Information and Referral form shall be placed in the client's case file, and the information relating to the referral shall be placed in the VR Program's data base for information and referral.
- 420.0.00      JOB COACHING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

- 420.1.00 POLICY:
- 420.1.01 VR may authorize or provide job coaching services to enable a client to prepare for competitive integrated work.
- 420.1.02 The counselor may choose to utilize job coaches under service agreements or approved collaborative agreement providers of Supported Employment Services for job coaching based on provider resources and resource availability in the local area.
- 420.1.03 VR shall not authorize on-the-job training (OJT) and a job coach simultaneously without supervisor approval. This approval shall be documented in the case file.
- 420.1.04 The client must be on the employer's payroll and receive benefits as any other employee/trainee.
- 420.1.05 During the job coaching training period a client may be paid a sub minimum wage by the employer in keeping with federal wage and hour regulations. A Sub-minimum Wage Certificate must be signed by all appropriate parties and a copy maintained in the case file.
- 420.1.06 Job coaching may either be provided as an integral component of supported employment or may be considered as a separate service. Job coaching as a separate service shall not be provided to an individual who qualifies for Supported Employment.
- 420.1.07 Since the individual receiving job coaching as a separate service is not eligible for supported employment, only section 110 funds may be utilized.
- 420.1.08 The following statuses are appropriate for job coaching as a separate service:
- A. Service status - Is used for providing job coaching. The client should be considered to be in training rather than in employment upon initiating job coaching even though the client is on the employer's payroll.
  - B. Employed status - Limited job coaching can be provided in this status. A case should be placed in this status when the client stabilizes to the point which requires a minimal amount of job coach intervention. As a guideline,



a case can be moved to Employed status when job coaching services amount to approximately twenty percent of the client's total work hours per month.

420.1.09 The time guidelines for job coaching only services are: one hundred (100) hours per client. If additional hours are needed for job coaching services, the case must be staffed with the counselor and approved by the supervisor. Should the service be extended, documentation of the staffing and the Supervisor's approval for extending job coaching services must be in the case file.

420.1.10 Job Coaching Reports:

A. Monthly Training Progress Report;

This report is completed monthly and shall be submitted to the counselor in a timely manner.

B. Job Coaching Services Time Sheet;

The job coach completes this form daily noting the hours of services provided to the client. The provider shall certify job coaching hours provided, prior to the payment for services.

420.2.00 INFORMATION:

420.2.01 Job coaching is intended to be an individualized service. However, if a job coach is working with more than one individual on the same job site at the same time, then the hourly rate of pay for the job coach is prorated among the individuals with whom the job coach is working. Typically, a job coach will not be utilized to serve more than two clients concurrently. The ratio shall be consistent with the needs of the clients to ensure quality services.

422.0.00 JOB OPPORTUNITIES DEVELOPMENT/GENERAL

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

422.1.00 POLICY:

422.1.01 Employment Services shall initiate and expand employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The team is responsible for coordinating and building working relationships with businesses and industries in the professionals' assigned area.

- 422.1.02 Programs and services shall be developed in cooperative partnerships with business and industry and collaborative relationships with appropriate agencies leading to job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- 422.1.03 Employment Services shall take the lead role in identifying and developing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

A. Provision of Business Services

1. Employment Services shall be the key in determining the needs and priorities of business services, and in coordinating, providing, or assisting other staff in the provision of these services.

- 422.1.04 All Employment Services activities on individual cases shall be documented in case notes in the client file.

- 424.0.00 JOB PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

- 424.1.00 POLICY:

- 424.1.01 VR shall assist a qualified job-ready individual in finding and/or securing suitable work consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.
- 424.1.02 Employment Services is the lead in providing specialized employment services to include individualized job placement services, as appropriate, for job-ready persons with disabilities.
- 424.1.03 When the individual has completed preparation for employment and is ready to go to work, the case shall be placed in job ready status.
- 424.1.04 The client is responsible for taking an active role in job search activities as documented in the Individualized Plan for Employment. An emphasis is placed on working with the team to identify appropriate potential employers and employment opportunities.

- 424.1.05 Employment Services shall document job placement activities in the case notes. These may include but are not limited to:
- A. Labor Market Information;
  - B. Consults;
  - C. Job search activities;
  - D. Placement information including:
    - 1. Employer contact information;
    - 2. Job title;
    - 3. Job duties;
    - 4. Pay rate;
    - 5. Benefits;
    - 6. Follow-up notes.
  - E. Employer needs or concerns as related to a client placed into employment and follow-up activities.
- 424.1.06 The case shall be placed in employed status at the time the individual begins to work.
- 424.1.07 The case shall remain in employed status for a minimum of ninety (90) consecutive days immediately prior to successful closure. Refer to 504.1.02
- 424.1.08 The counselor shall ensure placement follow-up services according to the needs of the individual for a minimum of 90 consecutive days to:
- A. Determine the suitability of the job;
  - B. Ascertain the individual's level of adjustment to the job;

C. Detect and resolve possible problems;

D. Assist the employer, co-workers, etc. in accepting the new employee.

424.2.00 INFORMATION:

424.2.01 VR's goal is to assist individuals with placement in entry-level jobs within their employment goals which offer career opportunities. VR's goal is also to assist individuals experiencing barriers to advancement in their careers.

424.2.02 Attention and planning must be given to placement concerns early in the individual's program. Specific attention must be given to the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Placement services usually become more concentrated toward the end of the vocational rehabilitation process.

424.2.03 It is the counselor's responsibility to ensure that the individual's case is closed in an appropriate employment outcome. Refer to 504.0.00

424.2.04 Placement of individuals under the age of eighteen (18) is restricted to non-hazardous occupations. Refer to Glossary: Hazardous Work Site.

426.0.00 ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

426.1.00 POLICY:

426.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of on-the-job training (OJT) for a client to achieve entry level job skills to meet their Individualized Plan of Employment goal of competitive integrated employment. Refer to Glossary: Competitive Integrated Employment

426.1.02 The counselor shall attempt to establish on-the-job training at no cost or by utilizing third party funding prior to authorizing an expenditure of VR funds.

426.1.03 VR shall not pay another state program, organization or institution to provide OJT unless approved by a supervisor. Documentation of the supervisor approval shall be included in the case file.

- 426.1.04 VR shall not authorize OJT and a job coach simultaneously without supervisor approval.
- 426.1.05 The client must be placed on the employer's payroll, paid at least minimum wage and receive benefits as any other employee/trainee.
- 426.1.06 VR may reimburse the employer/trainer one-half the agreed upon starting wage of the client/trainee for up to forty (40) hours per week. No reimbursement may be authorized for overtime.
- 426.1.07 An OJT salary supplement may be authorized for up to six months.
- 426.1.08 A monthly training progress report shall be obtained from the employer/trainer by the counselor to determine satisfactory progress of the client. The VR's Training Progress Report form should be used to document progress or the lack thereof.
- 426.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 426.2.01 Care must be taken by the counselor to select an appropriate OJT site to accomplish the client's employment goal.
- 426.2.02 There should be documentation in the case file of mutual understandings before the training begins concerning what is expected of the trainer/employer, the client/trainee and VR.
- 428.0.00 PHYSICAL/MENTAL RESTORATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 2002  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018  
O.C.G.A. 49 9 1 (8)
- 428.1.00 POLICY:
- 428.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of a physical or a mental restoration service(s) for a client to correct or substantially improve a physical or a mental condition which affects their work outcome.
- 428.1.02 VR shall not authorize or provide medical restoration service(s) for the following procedures:

- A. Abortion;
- B. Acupuncture;
- C. Gastrointestinal bypass surgery;
- D. Sex change procedure, medical or otherwise, nor any supportive service(s) associated with such a procedure(s);
- E. Stomach stapling;
- F. Transplant of the heart, liver, lung(s) or any combination thereof;
- G. Tubal ligation;
- H. Vasectomy;
- I. Routine medical and dental preventive care;
- J. Liposuction;
- K. Wiring of the Jaws (for weight loss);
- L. Any medical procedure which:
  - 1. Is not listed in the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Manual;
  - 2. Has a high mortality rate;
  - 3. Has a success rate reported to be less than seventy five percent successful;
  - 4. Reputable medical sources question the delivery system for the treatment or have shown the treatment to be useless or ineffective;
  - 5. Is determined by the VR's policy consultant to be experimental; or
  - 6. Does not substantially affect the client's employment outcome.

- 428.1.03 VR shall not authorize or provide mental restoration services for the following:
- A. Hypnotherapy;
  - B. Primal therapy;
  - C. Any treatment which reputable medical sources question or have shown to be useless or ineffective;
  - D. Any treatment which is determined by the VR's policy consultant to be experimental;
  - E. Any treatment which does not substantially affect the client's employment outcome.
- 428.1.04 The individual with a disability shall be allowed to choose the medical provider of their choice from among licensed specialists qualified in the diagnosis and treatment of their impairment(s) if they are not eligible for service(s) from a comparable benefit source. The medical provider must be willing to accept the VR Program's established fee(s).
- 428.1.05 The following criteria shall be met for the Provision of Services:
- A. The clinical status of the impairment, as indicated by the prognosis of the specialist's examination, must be stable or slowly progressive;
  - B. The anticipated outcome of the proposed treatment must benefit the individual in terms of a work outcome; and
  - C. The restoration service(s) is included on an approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- 428.1.06 Authorization of Services

Prior to authorizing a physical or mental restoration service(s) consideration shall be given to all available comparable benefits. Refer to 122.0.00

- A. The authorization for service(s) must be in writing and be issued prior to or simultaneously with the initiation of the service(s). Refer to 124.0.00 and 126.0.00
- B. The service shall be authorized utilizing licensed specialists based on applicable VR fees except as noted in the case of an intercurrent illness.
  - 1. For mental restoration services, a licensed specialist is a psychiatrist, psychologist, Neuropsychologist, an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, or Licensed Professional Counselor skilled in the treatment of mental illness or cognitive disabilities. When psychotherapy sessions exceed twenty-four sessions or a period of six months, the supervisor, counselor, and, as appropriate, other team members shall staff the case to determine progress toward competitive integrated employment. The results of this staffing shall be documented in the case file. Further provision of mental restoration services shall require a staffing for determination of progress every 10 sessions. Such staffings shall include the supervisor and shall be documented in the case file.
  - 2. For physical restoration, the licensed specialist is a physician, advanced practicing registered nurse or physician assistant who is recognized as being a specialist in the appropriate field, or a licensed medical provider (i.e. audiologist or optometrist) who has knowledge and expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of the specific condition.

428.1.07 VR may authorize or provide dental restoration services for a qualified individual only when the evidence indicates:

- A. A facial deformity from birth and correction required involves the mouth and/or teeth; Refer to 604.0.00
- B. Serious dental infections which affect other body systems (pericarditis, etc.) which must be documented by a physician specializing in the body system affected, specialist in family practice or internist; Refer to 430.0.00



- C. Serious injury (accidental) to teeth or mouth requiring dental or medical attention or other condition requiring facial plastic surgery; Refer to 604.0.00
- D. A dental condition, which if not treated, will directly interfere with the individual's primary physical impairment. The condition must be documented by the physician treating the primary physical impairment; or Refer to 430.0.00
- E. Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Syndrome. Refer to 604.0.00

428.1.08 Treatment Out-of-State

- A. A physical or mental restoration service(s) shall not be authorized out of state if the service(s) is available in Georgia except:
  - 1. In geographical areas routinely used for the convenience of the individual;
  - 2. Where it shall be economically beneficial for VR;
  - 3. In situations approved by VR's Office of Provider Management; or
  - 4. In situations involving informed choice in which the individual agrees to pay any costs in excess of allowable state fees, as applicable.
- B. Standards and fees established by the vocational rehabilitation program in the other state shall be followed and utilized for payment of service(s).

428.1.09 Treatment of Complications

- A. VR may assume responsibility for arranging for physical restoration services which, in addition to those initially authorized, may be needed for the safety of the client and the achievement of their physical restoration objective and ultimately of their employment goal.
- B. If a medical complication does occur, the counselor should act promptly to arrange for necessary treatment.

- C. If the seriousness of the complication(s) is such that it interferes with the possibility of the individual achieving the employment goal, it may be necessary to reevaluate the person or even to close the case as currently not eligible. In such a case the VR Program shall continue service(s) only until the acute medical condition has been resolved. Refer to 214.0.00

428.1.10 Long-Term Restoration

- A. If a physical or mental restoration service(s) is authorized for six months or more, the counselor shall monitor and document the client's progress in the case file at least every sixty (60) days.
- B. Annual or more frequent specialist examination(s) may be needed to assess the client's ability to progress toward their employment goal.
- C. The criteria of eligibility shall be continually applied.
- D. VR recognizes that, in some cases, the client's condition will extend beyond the rehabilitation process. In order to ensure the client's success on the job, community based treatment should be arranged by the counselor prior to case closure to the extent reasonable and possible based upon availability of treatment through other resources or sponsorship.

428.1.11 In cases involving hospitalization, refer to 432.0.00.

428.1.12 VR shall recommend that a client accept an approved physical or mental restoration service(s) when the service(s) shall improve the disabling condition.

428.1.13 Other purchased services cannot be authorized if the individual refuses approved restoration which shall improve their disability except for refusal by reason of religious belief or substantial risk.

428.2.00 INFORMATION:

428.2.01 The counselor shall not authorize a physical or mental restoration service(s) for a condition or impairment which does not affect the client's employment outcome.

- 430.0.00 ACUTE CONDITION OR INTERCURRENT ILLNESS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018
- 430.1.00 POLICY:
- 430.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of medical care for a client for an acute condition or intercurrent illness occurring during the time the individual is receiving planned vocational rehabilitation services and meets all of the following criteria:
- A. The client shall meet financial need criteria;
  - B. The client shall be in Trial Work Experience(s), Service, Job Ready, or Employed status; and
  - C. The acute condition or intercurrent illness shall be such that it would complicate or delay either the client's participation in trial work experience(s) or the client's achievement of their employment goal.
- 430.1.02 No VR funds shall be authorized or expended on any case that moves into Service status or above following the effective closing date of a priority category when the classification of the case puts it in a closed priority category. Refer to 218.0.00
- 430.1.03 VR shall not authorize medical care for an acute condition or intercurrent illness for an eligible individual who has been placed in a closed priority category under the Program's order of selection.
- 430.1.04 Physicians who are specialists in the field and/or approved hospitals should be used when practical. Payment shall be based on the applicable Program fee schedule.
- 430.1.05 The counselor shall provide a rationale in the case file which justifies the service.
- 430.1.06 The authorization for service(s) should be in writing prior to or simultaneously with the initiation of the services. Refer to 124.0.00 and 126.0.00

- 430.1.07 Prior to authorizing the service(s), consideration shall be given to all available comparable benefits. Refer to 122.0.00
- 430.1.08 If the acute condition or intercurrent illness leads to changes in the client's condition, it may be necessary to reevaluate the client, amend the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or close the case.
- 430.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 430.2.01 Acute conditions are those injuries or acute illnesses of short duration (thirty (30) days or less) occurring during the course of the client's participation in trial work experience(s) or rehabilitation such as unrelated accidental fractures, acute appendicitis, etc. If the intercurrent illness develops into a secondary disability, refer to 214.0.00.
- 432.0.00 HOSPITALIZATION  
Effective October 1, 1999  
O.C.G.A. 49-9-13
- 432.1.00 POLICY:
- 432.1.01 VR may authorize or provide hospitalization for an individual for diagnosis, surgery or other treatment of an impairment.
- 432.1.02 Hospitalization is limited to those hospitals which have been approved by the VR Program except in a situation of an acute or intercurrent illness.
- 432.1.03 Authorization and payment for service shall comply with 124.0.00 and 126.0.00.
- 432.1.04 If the individual has private hospitalization insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, it must be utilized.
- 432.1.05 The counselor shall inform the individual in writing before they go to the hospital they shall not be placed in a private room unless:
- A. The attending physician recommends it;
  - B. The hospital does not have semi-private or ward rooms; or

C. There is no semi-private room or ward space available and the hospitalization cannot be postponed.

432.2.00 INFORMATION:

432.2.01 When practical, public hospitals should be utilized for inpatient treatment of a client.

432.2.02 Placing a hospital patient on a caseload is acceptable as long as it is understood VR shall not pay for the current hospitalization and associated physician(s) expenses. The purpose of accepting the referral is to allow for a continuum of service to determine if the applicant qualifies for rehabilitation services.

434.0.00 CLINICS/GENERAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

434.1.00 POLICY:

434.1.01 VR shall, when appropriate and available, use clinical facilities in the provision of service(s) for a client.

434.1.02 Authorization of Services

A. Prior to an authorization for treatment, consideration must be first given to any clinical service available from a public hospital, public clinic or other community rehabilitation program offering the service for which the individual may be eligible. Refer to 122.0.00

B. Authorization and payment for service(s) shall comply with 124.0.00 and 126.0.00

434.1.03 Out of State Clinic

The use of an out of state clinic shall not be authorized if the service(s) is available in Georgia except as noted in 428.1.08.

- 436.0.00     AUDITORY TRAINING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 436.1.00     POLICY:
- 436.1.01     VR may authorize or provide auditory training to enable a client to prepare for, secure, advance in, or retain competitive integrated employment.
- 436.1.02     Auditory training must be recommended by a VR approved audiologist or speech pathologist.
- 436.1.03     Auditory training or aural rehabilitation shall be conducted by a licensed audiologist or speech pathologist with special training in this field. Program fees shall be utilized for authorization and payment.
- 436.2.00     INFORMATION:
- 436.2.01     Auditory training or aural rehabilitation teaches the individual how to effectively use their remaining hearing. It is usually accomplished with the aid of amplification.
- 436.2.02     Auditory training, lip reading training and aural rehabilitation are considered to be part of speech-language therapy.
- 438.0.00     SPEECH - LANGUAGE THERAPY  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 438.1.00     POLICY:
- 438.1.01     VR may authorize or provide speech - language therapy to enable a client to prepare for, secure, advance in, or retain a competitive integrated employment goal.
- 438.1.02     A speech-language evaluation must be obtained from a licensed speech pathologist or a VR approved speech and hearing clinic.
- 438.1.03     A speech-language evaluation shall include:

- A. An oral peripheral examination and an assessment of articulation, voice, fluency and language; and
  - B. Specific recommendations must describe how speech-language therapy including augmentative communication aids may significantly benefit the individual in terms of their specific employment goal. Refer to 456.0.00
- 438.1.04 The service(s) shall be authorized from a licensed provider based on applicable Program fees.
- 438.1.05 Prior to the authorization of an augmentative communication device, the counselor should consult with the assistive work technology staff to ensure the usability or appropriateness of the device as it relates to the individual's employment goal.
- 438.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 438.2.01 The following factors concerning the individual should be carefully considered before providing speech-language therapy:
- A. Age at the time the hearing loss occurred;
  - B. Intellectual ability;
  - C. Previous experience with speech-language therapy; and
  - D. Prognosis for further improvement with additional speech-language therapy.
- 438.2.02 Speech-language therapy attempts to develop or maintain intelligible speech for a person with a hearing loss, speech-language disorder or a fluency, voice or language disorder.
- 438.2.03 Speech-language therapy is unlikely to be significantly beneficial if the individual has been deaf since childhood unless the individual has previously benefited from speech-language therapy.

- 440.0.00 COGNITIVE REHABILITATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 440.1.00 POLICY:
- 440.1.01 VR may authorize or provide cognitive rehabilitation for a client to assist the person in improving or compensating for a variety of impaired cognitive processing abilities which affect the client's competitive integrated employment outcome.
- 440.1.02 A neuropsychological evaluation shall be used to determine the need for cognitive rehabilitation. In addition to the neuropsychological evaluation, other additional evaluations may be obtained from approved providers to determine the need for cognitive rehabilitation when information from the case file warrants further investigation. An evaluation recommending a program of cognitive rehabilitation should contain an outline of the specific goals and objectives to be used and the criteria for measuring progress of the intervention.
- 440.1.03 Continued VR sponsorship of cognitive rehabilitation shall be based on successful past progress as evidenced by the attainment of specified criteria for measurement. Such progress shall be measured and reported at a minimum of every month.
- 440.1.04 The cognitive rehabilitation service(s) shall be authorized from a Program approved provider based on applicable fees.
- 440.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 440.2.01 Cognitive rehabilitation refers to a systematic, goal-oriented intervention designed to improve or compensate for a variety of impaired cognitive processing abilities. Rehabilitation of these cognitive processes is not meant to take the place of education, activities of daily living and counseling, but to enhance responses to these activities. The purpose of cognitive rehabilitation should be to allow the individual to think, perceive, make decisions and respond with minimal or no assistance from others.
- 440.2.02 Cognitive rehabilitation can only be authorized or provided by VR for clients to assist in the attainment of the employment goal as identified in the



Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and supported by the evaluation of the neuropsychologist or the approved provider(s). Cognitive rehabilitation services authorized or provided by the VR Program should be part of a program for individuals who are brain injured that also includes daily living skills related to job acquisition and performance, and appropriate training and development of compensatory psychosocial adjustment skills an individual needs to survive in the work place.

**442.0.00 PHYSICAL OR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

**442.1.00 POLICY:**

**442.1.01** VR may authorize or provide physical therapy and/or occupational therapy for a client in order to assist in the attainment of the individual's employment goal.

**442.1.02** The therapy must be prescribed by the treating physician.

**442.1.03** The therapy may only be provided by a qualified therapist.

**442.1.04** A therapist who is in private practice may be used if they are a VR Program approved provider.

**442.1.05** The service shall be authorized from a Program approved provider based on applicable Program fees.

**442.1.06** Continued VR sponsorship of physical or occupational therapy shall be based on successful past progress as evidenced by the attainment of specified criteria for measurement. Such progress shall be measured and reported monthly.

**444.0.00**

**446.0.00 POST SECONDARY ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

Effective Date: October 1, 2002

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

Authority: 34 CFR 361.46; 361.48(b); 361.50(b); 361.53;361.54; RSA TAC-05-01

**446.1.00 POLICY:**

- 446.1.01 VR may authorize and assist with post-secondary academic or vocational training for a client sufficient to meet the entry level requirements of a specific occupation as agreed to by the individual and vocational rehabilitation counselor and as indicated by the employment goal.

NOTE: If the client is in default on a federal school loan, the client must repay the loan, arrange a repayment plan, or obtain an approved deferral prior to the authorization of VR training related services.

- 446.1.02 Prior to agreeing to academic training as part of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and prior to authorizing services in support of post-secondary academic training, the following criteria must be met:

- A. The counselor and client must agree that the training is necessary for the client to reach the entry level of the specific occupation for their employment goal;
- B. There must be evidence in the case file to support the counselor's rationale that the client has the ability to complete the training selected. Such evidence may include the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), psychological examination, vocational evaluation, acceptance into college, or prior college transcripts. If the client has previously attended college or vocational training, those transcripts should be included in the case file;

- 446.1.03 VR may assist with tuition, required school fees, books/supplies and, as appropriate, maintenance (housing and meals) only at any approved state, private, out-of-state post-secondary school, or proprietary school for an approved course of study. Verification that the school is approved must be made prior to any obligation to the client verbally, in an IPE or through an authorization of funds. VR support for approved tuition and fees shall be determined by the Business Unit and based on post-secondary school public fee schedules for the appropriate level of each public post-secondary schools in Georgia under the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) or the Board of Regents. Levels of post-secondary Georgia public schools include technical schools, junior colleges, senior colleges, regional universities, and universities. If a specific course of study for a specialized skill which is required as an industry standard for employment in a specific employment goal is not available in Georgia public schools, as determined by the Business Unit, tuition

and fees shall be determined by the Business Unit based on the actual cost of the specialized skills training at institutions offering the required course of study. Labor market information based on actual statistics must be obtained and reviewed prior to agreeing to provide VR Support. Refer to Glossary: Comparable Program of Study; Proprietary School; Specialized Skills Training

- 446.1.04 Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf are exempt from the restriction to use the state public school fees for tuition and required fees for a client. However, comparable benefits must be deducted where applicable.
- 446.1.05 The client must apply for, and present proof of, a completed application for any available comparable benefits including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). (Refer to 122.0.00) The client must provide a copy of their Student Aid Report (SAR), an award letter and a copy of their student account detail report from the institution for the current and where applicable previous semester/quarter, before VR shall authorize payment for post-secondary training expenses. These documents must be provided by the client no later than thirty (30) days prior to the institution's due date for payment of tuition and fees for the semester/quarter or no later than five (5) days after the information is made available by the institution(s). Failure to submit the required documentation by the due dates may result in non-payment by VR or a late payment. Any late fees associated with a client's failure to submit required documentation by the due date shall be the responsibility of the client. An exception may be granted by the supervisor when case documentation clearly reflects that the client has not been able to provide all required documentation due to institutional delays (FAFSA or PST institutions), and the client will be adversely affected if the authorization is not created prior to receiving all the documentation. In such cases, authorizations should not exceed twelve (12) credit hours.
- 446.1.06 All applicable comparable benefits for which the client has been approved must be subtracted from the VR's maximum allowed rates for tuition, fees, books/supplies and maintenance (housing and meals) prior to the authorization/utilization of VR funds. Comparable benefits for training may include, but are not limited to, grants, non-merit scholarships and all HOPE Program funds. (Refer to 122.0.00) Comparable benefits do not include merit scholarships unless the scholarship is specifically designated for services that

VR would otherwise fund (e.g. tuition or fees). Refer to Glossary: Merit Scholarship

NOTE: The HOPE Scholarship is a comparable benefit because the state program provides public funds to all Georgia students who meet the eligibility requirements and the funds are specifically designated for services that VR would otherwise fund.

- 446.1.07 The client must inform the counselor within ten (10) days of any approval for comparable benefits for school support or if the client directly receives such funds related to school.
- 446.1.08 The client shall not be required to borrow money to cover educational expenses; however, this is an option for those who choose to attend a school where all costs are not covered in some way by an entity other than the client.
- 446.1.09 VR shall not sponsor housing in support of academic training if the client lives within thirty-five (35) miles of the school unless the unique circumstances of the individual are proven to make commuting to and from school to be unreasonable for that particular individual. Examples of such circumstances include but are not limited to the following:
- A. The nature and limitations of the individual's disability;
  - B. Lack of public or private transportation;
  - C. Traffic and commuting time required;
  - D. Length of time between classes;
  - E. Proximity of handicapped parking to classes.

In order to justify payment for school related housing for an individual who lives within thirty-five (35) miles of the school, the counselor shall consult with their supervisor regarding the circumstances of the client. The counselor shall document the consultation and the client's special circumstances in the case file.

- 446.1.10 VR assistance with post-secondary training shall be limited, during the first two years, to an institution within thirty-five (35) miles of the client's residence unless:
- A. The required coursework for the client's program of study is not available at the local college or,
  - B. The coursework will not transfer to a four (4) year institution when a four (4) year degree is required for the employment goal.
  - C. The local institution cannot accommodate the needs of the client's disability.
- 446.1.11 The client shall take a full course load, as defined by the institution, unless:
- A. Medically contraindicated as documented in their case file each semester/quarter by a licensed specialist in the field of the client's disability;
  - B. The client does not need a full load to complete their course work; or
  - C. The required courses in the client's program are not available due to scheduling.
- The client shall not take less than a full course load for more than two (2) semesters/quarters during their training program.
- 446.1.12 VR shall authorize and make payment for only those courses and electives outlined in an approved curriculum for a specific certification, diploma or degree from the approved school, and only for courses that lead to the certification, diploma or degree required for entry level into the chosen employment goal. The client must submit a schedule of their classes each semester/quarter prior to VR authorization for the following semester/quarter.
- 446.1.13 The counselor may authorize and make payment for the taking of any course only once. A supervisor may approve a counselor's request to authorize the repeating of a course by a client. Such approval may be granted only once for the same course.

- 446.1.14 The client must present a copy of their semester/quarter grades to the VR counselor within five (5) days of the school posting of grades. This information shall be maintained in the case file.
- 446.1.15 The client must maintain a minimum cumulative or 2.0 grade point average, or the minimum cumulative grade point average necessary to maintain good standing with the school and to graduate from their approved course of study required for the employment goal, whichever is greater. One probationary semester or quarter may be authorized to allow the client to raise their grade point average. If the client does not achieve the required cumulative grade point average at the end of the probationary period, VR shall not resume sponsorship until the client has reached the required minimum cumulative grade point average.

NOTE: When the client's grade point average drops below 2.0 or the grade point average necessary to maintain good standing, whichever is greater, the counselor should immediately provide the client notice using a Notice of Change that VR sponsorship may be terminated and the actions required to avoid termination. Doing so provides the thirty (30) day notice required prior to a reduction or termination of service.

- 446.1.16 VR shall authorize or make payment for no more than two (2) probationary semesters/quarters during the entire training program. The counselor may not authorize two probationary semesters/quarters sequentially.
- 446.1.17 The client shall maintain regular contact with their counselor. Any change in the client's employment goal or training program must be agreed upon, in advance, by the client and counselor, and must be reflected by an amended IPE. The client shall not withdraw from any class or the school itself without first contacting and obtaining agreement from the counselor.
- 446.1.18 VR sponsorship for a freshman pursuing an undergraduate degree (bachelor's degree) shall be limited to five (5) years and for each year thereafter shall be decreased by one (1) year based on the client's enrollment status (sophomore, junior, senior).

If the time sponsored by VR in post-secondary training extends beyond the expected date of successful completion as defined by the curriculum, one

additional semester/quarter may be authorized with supervisor approval and documentation in the case file.

- 446.1.19 For all post-secondary school cases, an annual in-depth review is required to assess the client's training results and to determine if the client is making adequate progress towards the established employment goal. Satisfactory progress shall not be occurring for those individuals who continuously attend training on less than a full time basis. If the client is not progressing satisfactorily in their approved course of study, training shall be suspended, and the counselor and client shall work together to identify a more appropriate employment goal. The annual review shall be documented in the case file.
- 446.1.20 VR may authorize the provision of correspondence training for a client if this is the most reasonable means by which the individual may receive the necessary training from an approved vendor.
- 446.1.21 VR may assist with payment for the following ancillary services:
- A. Any admission test required by the school or institution;
  - B. Vocational occupational training supplies may be approved based on a list of required items provided by the professor, syllabus or other official document.
  - C. Required books/supplies up to the maximum rate as determined by the Business Unit but not exceeding the actual cost. Proof of payment reflecting books/supplies purchased is required.
  - D. Training aids and/or assistive work technology;
  - E. Interpreter, readers or note takers for a client who is deaf, blind or deaf-blind;
  - F. Required parking fees for students who are commuting to and from school;
  - G. Certification and/or licensure examinations required by program;
  - H. Occupational license required to complete training and enter employment in the agreed upon employment goal; or

I. Tutoring.

NOTE: Should any of the above items be considered reasonable accommodations for which the school should be responsible, payment for these services shall be sought from the school prior to the authorization of VR funds.

446.1.22 If a client receives an overpayment during a semester/quarter, the client must immediately refund VR, agree to a payment plan or agree to have future payments adjusted to deduct the overpayment. The client shall reimburse VR when the following circumstances apply:

- A. The client receives financial assistance from comparable benefits for services (tuition, required school fees, books/supplies and maintenance (housing and meals,) already paid for by VR;
- B. The client receives a refund as a result of dropping a class;
- C. The client has not utilized VR training funds for the purpose they were intended.

The client shall reimburse VR per the following VR reimbursement procedures:

- D. The client shall pay the full amount of required reimbursement; no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the institution's due date for payment of tuition and fees for the next semester/quarter, or
- E. The client shall have the amount deducted from the next authorization(s) until the balance has been paid in full.

If the client refuses to refund VR, post-secondary training support shall be suspended, and/or the case may be closed for fraud/misuse of Program funds. Refer to 518.1.02H

446.1.23 The counselor and client shall pursue accommodations/support services for training that may be available from post-secondary training institutions in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If the school will not provide the



necessary accommodations, VR may authorize the needed services but shall seek reimbursement from the school.

448.0.00 POST GRADUATE TRAINING

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: May 15, 2018

Authority: 34 CFR 361.46; 361.48(f); 361.50(b); 361.52; 361.53, 361.54; RSA PAC 90-7; RSA PD 92-02; RSA PD 97-04

448.1.00 POLICY:

448.1.01 VR may provide post graduate training when such training is necessary to obtain entry level work in the client's agreed to specific occupation. Care must be taken in the joint development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) not to plan services that surpass those required for entry level into the agreed upon occupation as indicated by the employment goal on the IPE. VR sponsorship for a post graduate degree shall be defined by the training curriculum. If the time sponsored by VR extends beyond the expected date of successful completion, per the curriculum and as reflected on the client's IPE, one additional semester/quarter may be authorized with supervisor approval and shall be documented in the case file.

448.1.02 VR may authorize the provision of post-graduate university training for a client whose employment goal requires a post-graduate degree for entry level work in a specific occupation under the following conditions:

- A. The client must be accepted in good standing (not probationary or provisional status) before they may be considered for program sponsorship to an approved graduate school;
- B. The client sponsored by VR for graduate level work must maintain the minimum grade point average (GPA) required by the accredited program from which graduation is planned. Program sponsorship may be suspended or terminated for failure to maintain the required grade point average;
- C. All policies relating to post-secondary academic and vocational training shall apply.

- 449.0.00 YOUTH & STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
Effective Date: July 1, 2017  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018
- 449.1.00 POLICY:
- 449.1.01 Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff shall recognize that every student or youth, regardless of the severity of his or her disability, is considered able to benefit in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome.
- 449.1.02 VR staff shall participate in the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) transition planning and person centered planning meetings.
- 449.1.03 VR shall provide students fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) years old Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) that allows them to explore the world of work and engage in work based learning opportunities for the purpose of becoming employed in a meaningful career. If individualized services are needed in addition to Pre-ETS, VR shall provide these services following VR policy of application, determination of eligibility, comprehensive needs assessment, and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development.
- 449.1.04 A student with a disability is an individual who:
- A. Is in an educational program; and
  - B. Is aged fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) of age;
  - C. Is eligible for and receiving special education or related services under IDEA; or
  - D. Is an individual with a disability for purposes of section 504 of the Act.
- 449.1.05 A youth with a disability means an individual with a disability who:
- A. Is not younger than fourteen (14) years of age; and
  - B. Is not older than twenty-four (24) years of age.
- NOTE: There is no requirement that a "youth with a disability" be participating in an educational program.

- 449.1.06 VR shall provide the following required pre-employment transition services:
- A. Job exploration counseling.
  - B. Work-based learning experiences which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting, that is provided in an integrated environment in the community to the maximum extent possible.
  - C. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education.
  - D. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living.
  - E. Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring or person-centered planning.
    - 1. Potentially eligible students may only receive services that address the five areas listed above. Students who have applied for, and have been found eligible for, vocational rehabilitation may receive the full range of vocational rehabilitation services including services such as college or other vocational training, assistive work technology, and/or job placement. Refer to Glossary: Potentially Eligible
- 450.0.00 **TRANSITIONING STUDENTS**  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 450.1.00 **POLICY:**
- 450.1.02 Transition services shall be provided to eligible students with disabilities to facilitate the transition from the receipt of educational services in secondary school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services oriented toward a competitive integrated employment outcome. Transition services may be either services to eligible individuals or services to groups.
- 450.1.03 The coordinated transition activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests and shall include:

- A. Consultation and technical assistance to assist the schools in planning for the transition of students with disabilities;
- B. Outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transitioning services;
- C. Transition planning that facilitates the development and completion of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Individualized Transition Plan (ITP);
- D. Development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) which identifies the employment goal and the vocational rehabilitation services to enable the student to obtain a competitive integrated employment outcome.

- 450.1.04 The IPE shall be completed and signed by the student prior to his or her graduation from high school. Refer to 308.0.00
- 450.1.05 Transitioning services may be provided for groups of students and may be provided prior to any or all of the students becoming applicants for vocational rehabilitation services.
- 450.1.06 Consultative and technical assistance services may be provided to schools as services to groups for the benefit of groups of transitioning students with disabilities.
- 450.1.07 Project Search is school to work immersion program involving collaboration among VR, secondary schools, business and supported employment providers which assists transitioning youth with developmental disabilities to acquire work skills leading to competitive integrated employment. This training program is an internship based on the supported employment model where the clients train at different job sites with the assistance of a job coach. The counselor links the student with a supported employment provider prior to the end of their internship to initiate on-going supports if the student is hired by the internship site host or to initiate job placement and supported employment services. Clients may be hired by the training site employer or will continue in supported employment services and receive job development placement assistance.
- 450.2.00 INFORMATION:

- 450.2.01 Services to groups are vocational rehabilitation services that are provided to a group of individuals in a group setting or provided for the benefit of groups of individuals.
- 450.2.02 Technical assistance and consultative services to school system personnel are considered services for groups, since all transitioning students may benefit from those services.
- 452.0.00 WORK READINESS TRAINING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 452.1.00 POLICY:
- 452.1.01 VR may authorize or provide work readiness training for a qualified individual for the purpose of developing pre-employment skills (to prepare for a job search), work maturity skills (to keep a job) and/or life skills (core skills necessary to function productively in society) for the attainment of work readiness.
- 452.1.02 The evaluation of work readiness shall be initiated during the preliminary assessment and then reviewed and updated continuously throughout the provision of work readiness training.
- 452.1.03 Prior to the provision of work readiness training:
- A. The individual must have a work readiness assessment to determine the work readiness training needs; and
  - B. VR staff and the client must agree that work readiness training is necessary for the client to reach their employment goal.
- 452.1.04 VR staff or a community based provider providing work readiness training shall:
- A. Provide a monthly progress report on each client receiving work readiness training; and
  - B. At the conclusion of training, provide a final report to the counselor.

452.2.00 INFORMATION:

452.2.01 Work readiness training may include any or all of the following components:

A. Pre-employment:

1. Making career decisions;
2. Using labor market information;
3. Preparing a resume;
4. Completing an application;
5. Interviewing.

B. Work Maturity:

1. Being consistently punctual;
2. Maintaining regular attendance;
3. Demonstrating positive attitudes and behavior;
4. Presenting an appropriate appearance;
5. Completing tasks effectively.

C. Life Skills:

1. Self-concept/Self-esteem/Self-confidence;
2. Dealing with emotions, conflict, and stress;
3. Setting priorities and goals;

4. Making decisions and solving problems;
5. Planning and managing time;
6. Productive thinking;
7. Identifying interests and work styles;
8. Why we work;
9. Education as opportunities;
10. Resources for achievement;
11. Dealing with failure;
12. Effective listening and speaking;
13. Assertiveness;
14. Relating to people;
15. Systems thinking;
16. Information seeking skills;
17. Giving and following directions.

453.0.00 EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING

Effective Date: September 1, 2005

Revised Date: May 15, 2018

453.1.00 POLICY:

453.1.01 Employment Skills Training may be authorized for a qualified client who requires such training for entry into their chosen employment goal.

- 453.1.02 The provider of such training must be an approved provider with demonstrated skills in the area in which the training is provided. The provider shall provide an outline and organized procedures for the training prior to its initiation.
- 453.1.03 Employment Skills Training shall be:
- A. Consistent with the needs and abilities of the client;
  - B. Limited to occupations with a specific vocational preparation time SVP of level 4 or below (Refer to Select Characteristics of Occupations Defined in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET));
  - C. Limited to a specific skill or set of skills within an occupation (Examples: plasterer, wall-paper hanging/faux painting, carpenter's helper);
  - D. Limited to hands on training.
- 453.1.04 The duration of Specific Skills Training shall not exceed 125% of the SVP for the occupation.
- 453.1.05 Skills or occupational goals requiring certification or licensure are excluded from this training.
- 454.0.00 SUPPORTIVE SERVICES/GENERAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 2002
- 454.1.00 POLICY:
- 454.1.01 VR may authorize or provide a supportive service(s) only to enable an individual to participate in or receive benefit from another authorized or provided diagnostic, assessment or primary service which is in support of the individual's attainment of an appropriate employment goal.
- VR shall not authorize reinstatement of driver's license, occupational license, or any other permit that was revoked due to illegal activity by the client.
- 454.1.02 The Program shall consider the following services as supportive services:  
NOTE: This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing.



- A. Personal assistance;
- B. Child care;
- C. Convalescent care;
- D. Deposits;
- E. Drugs and expendable medical items;
- F. Glasses or contact lenses;
- G. Hearing aid(s); Augmentative communication aids;
- H. Interpreting service(s);
- I. Low visual aid(s);
- J. Maintenance;
- K. Nurse; aide; sitter;
- L. Permit or occupational license;
- M. Reader service;
- N. Recovery residence;
- O. Referral;
- P. Residence modification;
- Q. Housing and meals or lodging;
- R. Services to family members;
- S. Tools and equipment/occupational or medical;

T. Transportation;

U. Uniform/occupational clothing;

V. Vehicle modification;

W. Work site accommodation and/or modification;

X. Any service which cannot be provided independently of another service, i.e., gait training for a prosthetic wearer.

\*NOTE: In some circumstances, these services may be considered a primary service. When it is a primary service, a rationale shall be provided in the case file.

454.1.03 Supportive services may be provided to support an individual in work for stabilization purposes only and shall not exceed forty-five (45) days.

454.1.04 A supportive service cannot be provided independently of a primary rehabilitation service. Therefore, when the primary service is terminated the supportive service(s) shall also be terminated.

454.1.05 Financial need criteria must be applied. Support Services are subject to the same financial need assessment determination as the primary service(s) they support unless they are specifically exempt from financial consideration.

454.1.06 Order of selection must be applied.

454.1.07 Comparable benefits must be applied.

454.1.08 Any requirement contained in a VR policy topic and not listed herein shall be applied.

454.2.00 INFORMATION:

454.2.01 A supportive service is another service which may be provided in conjunction with a diagnostic and/or assessment service(s) only to assist in determining if an applicant is qualified or to derive the full benefit of a primary rehabilitation service(s) being provided to achieve a rehabilitation objective.

- 454.2.02 The listing contained in 454.1.02 is intended to be a reference guide. It is not all inclusive.
- 456.0.00 ASSISTIVE WORK TECHNOLOGY  
Effective Date: February 15, 2017  
Revised Date: May 15, 2018
- 456.1.00 POLICY:
- 456.1.01 VR may authorize or provide, where appropriate, assistive work technology for the purpose of assessment, including assessment while participating in trial work experience(s), for an individual in need of an appropriate mode of communication, for the provision of Information and Referral services, or when it directly contributes to the individual's competitive integrated employment outcome. However, the purchase of hearing aids does not require consult or approval from AWT staff unless deemed necessary by the counselor.
- 456.1.02 The counselor shall consult with AWT staff when considering assistive work technology. However, the purchase of hearing aids does not require consult or approval with AWT staff unless deemed necessary by the counselor.
- 456.1.03 Given the rapid process of technology development and given that assistive work technology devices are often personalized, devices that are complex, new, or of questionable value may be appropriate to provide. The device may be authorized if the specialist, as appropriate, the counselor, and AWT agree that the device will be beneficial to the client in reaching their employment goal.
- 456.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 456.2.01 Care must be taken by the counselor to ensure other appropriate policy topics have been reviewed and applied when considering authorizing a service under this topic, e.g. 498.0.00 and 499.0.00.
- 456.2.02 Assistive work technology services include:
- A. Diagnostic assessment using a systematic application of technology and technology related services;

- B. Technical consultation for Program staff;
- C. Search for assistive work technology devices that already exist which could help in the individual's vocational rehabilitation;
- D. Research to develop innovative devices and procedures that could help in the vocational rehabilitation of clients;
- E. Instruction of Program staff and clients in the application of assistive work technology and assistive work technology related service; and
- F. Assistance in finding assistive work technology funding sources to pay for devices and/or services.

456.2.03 Examples of services provided by the assistive work technology team include:

- A. Transdisciplinary assistive work technology team consultation;
- B. Architectural adaptations to help with accessibility;
- C. Customization of existing equipment or devices;
- D. Assistance with work site accommodation and/or modification;
- E. Computer adaptations for environmental control and work site needs;
- F. Adjustments, maintenance and repair of devices;
- G. Telecommunication devices.

456.2.04 Assistive Work Technology Definitions

- A. Assistive work technology device: Any item, equipment and/or system which is used to improve, protect or maintain the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. A device may be acquired commercially and used as is, or customized, or may be developed as a prototype.

- B. Assistive work technology service: Any service that assists a person with a disability in selecting, obtaining or using assistive work technology as follows:
1. Assessing an individual's need for assistive work technology in appropriate settings (clinic, home, work, school);
  2. Identifying and coordinating other technology related interventions and services;
  3. Selecting, adapting, designing, applying, repairing or replacing an assistive work technology device(s);
  4. Purchasing, leasing or obtaining an assistive work technology device(s);
  5. Training or technical assistance to professionals, consumers and their representative, teachers or employers.
- C. Assistive work technologies include:
1. Augmentative communications;
  2. Computer access;
  3. Job accommodation and restructuring;
  4. Cognitive remediation;
  5. Transportation and mobility access;
  6. Environmental access;
  7. Seating and positioning;
  8. Sensory aids;
  9. Robotics.
- D. Assistive work technology occupations include:

1. Rehabilitation engineer; (software, electrical, etc.)
2. Rehabilitation technologist;
3. Fabricator;
4. Occupational therapist;
5. Physical therapist;
6. Speech pathologist;
7. Special education teacher;
8. Orthotist and Prosthetist;
9. Physiatrist;
10. Rehabilitation Technician.

458.0.00	CHILD CARE Effective Date: October 1, 1999
458.1.00	POLICY:
458.1.01	VR may authorize child care for children twelve years old and younger only to enable an individual with a disability to participate in a primary vocational rehabilitation service.
458.1.02	VR may authorize childcare only for those hours, plus two, that the individual with a disability is actively participating in a primary vocational rehabilitation service.
458.1.03	VR may not authorize childcare to enable an individual with a disability to participate in another service overnight or to otherwise be away from home for prolonged periods of time.

- 458.1.04 A family member (any relative by blood or marriage or any other person living in the same household with whom the individual has a close interpersonal relationship) shall not be paid for child care services.
- 458.1.05 The individual (parent) with a disability should, in consultation with VR staff, choose the child care provider. Where feasible, providers licensed by the Department of Human Resources should be used.
- 458.1.06 Fees, not to exceed the Program's maximum allowable fee for the service, may be negotiated with the provider.
- 458.1.07 If the individual needs child care services for a period longer than three months, the counselor shall consult with the supervisor to determine the appropriateness of the Program authorizing the provision or continuance of the service. Refer to 126.0.00
- 458.1.08 Any comparable benefit shall be utilized prior to the authorization of any VR Program funds for childcare.
- 458.1.09 A rationale which justifies the need for the service shall be documented in the case notes.
- 458.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 458.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 460.0.00 CONVALESCENT CARE  
Effective Date: October 1, 2002
- 460.1.00 POLICY:
- 460.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of convalescent care for a qualified individual.
- 460.1.02 Convalescent care may be authorized after surgery under one or more of the following conditions:
- A. The individual's home conditions are not conducive for satisfactory convalescence;

- B. The distance from home to hospital makes it impractical for the individual to be transported back and forth for medical follow-up;
- C. The cost of private care can be reduced by using a convalescent care facility; and/or
- D. When recommended by the attending physician.

- 460.1.03 Any convalescent home used shall be approved by the Department of Human Resources.
- 460.1.04 The Office of Provider Management shall determine the appropriate fee prior to the authorization of service.
- 460.1.05 If an individual needs convalescent care for a period longer than three months, the counselor shall consult with the supervisor to determine the appropriateness of the VR Program authorizing the provision or continuance of the service. Refer to 210.0.00.
- 460.1.06 A rationale which justifies the provision of the service, unless recommended in writing by the attending physician, shall be documented in the case notes.
- 460.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 460.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 461.0.00 DEPOSITS  
Effective Date: October 1, 2002
- 461.1.00 POLICY:
- 461.1.01 The Program may authorize the provision of deposits for a client when necessary for participation in a primary service away from home or when necessary for relocation for the purpose of job placement.
- 461.1.02 Deposits may be provided:



When payment for maintenance is necessary to defray the additional costs of shelter to enable the individual to participate in a primary rehabilitation service away from their normal residence. This deposit may only be made one time;

When a housing security deposit is required for an individual to relocate for a job placement, a one-time security deposit may be included as part of the relocation costs;

When charges for deposits of utilities are required for an individual to relocate for a job placement, a one-time initiation fee may be included as part of the rehabilitation costs;

The recipient of the payment for the deposits shall be informed that, if the deposit is returned, it shall be refunded to VR;

VR may authorize a deposit only once for a qualified individual for a primary service other than for relocation for the purpose of job placement;

VR may authorize a deposit only once for a client for relocation for the purpose of job placement. Refer to 484.0.00

461.1.03 Deposits can never be the only service provided. It is a supportive service to be provided only to enable an individual with a disability to participate in a primary vocational rehabilitation service(s) by paying the extra costs incurred by the individual as a direct result of participation in the vocational rehabilitation program.

NOTE: Deposits are not considered maintenance and, therefore, not counted as part of the maintenance being authorized.

461.2.00 INFORMATION:

461.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

462.0.00 DRUGS AND EXPENDABLE MEDICAL ITEMS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

462.1.00 POLICY:

- 462.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of prescribed drugs and/or expendable medical items for an individual.
- 462.1.02 VR shall not authorize a drug or expendable medical item which is considered experimental or which is being utilized for research purposes.
- 462.1.03 Prescribed drugs and/or expendable medical items shall only be authorized to diagnose, treat or alleviate the disabling condition(s) or acute/intercurrent illness. Refer to 428.0.00 and 430.0.00
- 462.1.04 VR may authorize no more than a 1-month supply of an individually prescribed drug at any one time.
- 462.1.05 VR may authorize no more than a 2-month supply of any expendable medical item at any one time.
- 462.1.06 Authorization for prescribed drugs and/or expendable medical items may not be made after a client has been employed more than 30 days.
- 462.1.07 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 464.0.00 EXAMINATION/ENTRANCE, OCCUPATIONAL BOARD AND QUALIFYING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 464.1.00 POLICY:
- 464.1.01 VR may authorize payment for an examination for a client to enable him/her to qualify for entrance into training or for the practice of the agreed upon employment goal.
- 464.1.02 VR shall not authorize the payment of union dues, membership fees or bonding.
- 464.1.03 VR may only authorize any particular examination once.
- 464.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 464.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

466.0.00 GLASSES OR CONTACT LENSES

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

466.1.00 POLICY:

466.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of glasses or contact lenses.

466.1.02 Glasses or contact lenses may be provided:

- A. If prescribed by an approved licensed ophthalmologist or an optometrist;  
and
- B. When they will vocationally benefit a person who is blind or visually  
impaired; or
- C. As a service for a person who needs corrective lenses to determine eligibility;  
or
- D. As a service for a client being served for a disability other than blindness or  
visual impairment when they are vocationally necessary.

Note: Prior to purchasing progressive or transitional lenses for a client, the counselor shall obtain a statement from the ophthalmologist or optometrist that such lenses are recommended because of the client's vocational or medical needs and are necessary for the client's optimal performance.

466.2.00 INFORMATION:

466.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

468.0.00 HEARING AID(S)

Effective Date: February 15, 2017

468.1.00 POLICY:

468.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of hearing aid(s) for a qualified individual.

468.1.02 A hearing aid(s) may only be provided when:

- A. Recommended by a licensed audiologist or approved speech and hearing center; and
- B. It will benefit a person who is deaf, hard of hearing or deaf/blind by Program standards in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; or
- C. The aid(s) is a support service for a person who needs corrected hearing to determine eligibility; or
- D. The aid(s) is a service for a client being served for a disability other than hearing disorder if the client's hearing impairment will have an impact on work outcome and the counselor can document in the case notes the effect of the hearing loss on the client's employment in terms of specific job requirements.

468.1.03 An audiogram must be obtained prior to the purchase of a hearing aid.

468.1.04 Hearing aid(s) evaluation

- A. A hearing aid evaluation report provides a general description of the amplification device recommended and indicates the individual's preference regarding the device;
- B. When there is an existing hearing aid which has problems, the hearing aid evaluation shall include an evaluation of the client's functioning with the old aid. The report shall have a description of the general characteristics of the old amplification device and a description of the functional problems the client is experiencing with the old device. A comparison shall be made in the report between client's functioning with the old device and with the recommended device.

468.1.05 The authorized price for hearing aid(s) shall be consistent with VR's fee schedule.

468.1.06 Each individual provided a hearing aid shall be instructed to return to the prescribing audiologist or speech and hearing center to have the aid checked within twenty (20) days.

- 468.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 468.2.01 A hearing aid evaluation is a prescriptive evaluation to determine if the individual can benefit from amplification and to determine the characteristics that an aid should have for this individual to help improve receiving and understanding. Standard (non-vented) or adjustable molds are available and appropriate for the hearing aid evaluation. Refer to 608.0.00
- 468.2.02 A hearing aid analysis is the acoustic and electronic analysis of the aid while it is on the individual to determine if it is working properly.
- 468.2.03 Amplified Communication includes aided Pure Tone Average, aided speech audiometry (speech reception), and aided speech discrimination with background noise scores to clarify how the client's residual hearing and amplification device will function in a work setting.
- 468.2.04 Devices that dry the hearing aid may be purchased if the client's employment goal requires them to be in a humid or hot environment to prevent the aid from being corroded by moisture.
- 470.0.00 INTERPRETING\TRANSLITERATING SERVICE  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 470.1.00 POLICY:
- 470.1.01 VR may use a qualified interpreter\transliterater, including tactile interpreting, when necessary to assist an individual in receiving a service or instruction from any provider except as noted in 470.1.02.
- 470.1.02 Interpreting\transliterating services shall not be authorized when another authority is legally responsible for providing the interpreting service in connection with its activity or service delivery. Where cooperative agreements exist, the terms of the agreement shall be followed.
- 470.1.03 The authorization of interpreting\transliterating services does not require that the individual meet the financial need criteria. Refer to 206.0.00

- 470.1.04 The counselor Rehabilitation Counselor shall determine the need for an interpreter/transliterater.
- 470.1.05 A VR staff person skilled in the use of sign language or tactile communication, as appropriate, shall be utilized to ensure the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services provided during assessment or under the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). When such a staff person is not available or appropriate for the situation, an interpreter\transliterater shall be used who meets the standards of the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- 470.1.06 Payment of an interpreter shall be in accordance with the Program's approved interpreter fee schedule.
- 470.1.07 Any qualified interpreter\transliterater or agency with a service agreement with the Program may be used for interpreting assignments beyond the capability of local VR Program staff.
- 470.1.08 VR's procedures for billing and payment for an interpreting\transliterating service shall be followed.
- 470.1.09 An interpreter\transliterater may function under the following circumstances as a job coach if specifically contracted as such by the Program. When an interpreter\transliterater is functioning as a job coach, their role change must be clearly explained to the client, the employer, and any significant other person involved with the case. In this situation, the individual may be paid either a job coach fee or an interpreter fee, but not both.
- 470.1.10 Examples of appropriate uses of an interpreter\transliterater are:
- A. Emergency situations - Last minute cancellation by a previously scheduled job coach;
  - B. Multiple need situations - Only one signing job coach is available and more than one client needs signing job coach services simultaneously.
- 470.2.00 INFORMATION:

- 470.2.01 Comparable Services and Benefits shall be applied. If another entity is responsible for providing an interpreter\transliterators but will not do so, the Program should negotiate a shared cost. Client services should not be delayed or interrupted while negotiations occur.
- Note: Community Rehabilitation Facilities and other vendors may be obligated by their agreement with the program to provide interpreter/transliterators services. Refer to the Provider Guidelines Manual.
- 470.2.02 The counselor needs to determine which form of sign language their client uses. Some Deaf individuals communicate with American Sign Language (ASL), while others use a form of signed English. An ‘interpreter’ uses American Sign Language and a ‘transliterators’ uses signed English. These are separate skills in two different languages and not all ‘interpreters’ have the ability to perform at the required level in both areas.
- 470.2.03 The Georgia standard for an interpreter/transliterators is that the person shall be Certified by:
- A. The Registry Of Interpreters For The Deaf (RID);
  - B. The National Association of the Deaf at Levels III, IV or V, which is considered a qualified interpreter\transliterators; or
  - C. The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency’s Vocational Rehabilitation Program’s Quality Assurance testing at Levels III, IV or V, which is considered a qualified interpreter\transliterators.
- 472.0.00 MAINTENANCE  
Effective Date: April 1 2003
- 472.1.00 POLICY:
- 472.1.01 VR may authorize maintenance for an individual.
- 472.1.02 Maintenance refers solely to the payment of those additional costs incurred by an applicant or qualified client while participating in an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs, or while receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

- 472.1.03 Maintenance may be authorized only as a supportive service. Maintenance shall never be the only service an individual is receiving at a given time.
- 472.1.04 No maintenance shall be authorized in to clients in Referral, Wait List, or Services Interrupted status.
- 472.1.05 In all cases where maintenance is to be paid by VR, comparable benefits or other sources of maintenance shall be utilized first.
- 472.1.06 The amount of maintenance shall be based upon the out-of-ordinary or extra costs brought upon the applicant or client as a result of the provision of other primary vocational rehabilitation services.
- 472.1.07 There are two types of maintenance:
- A. Regular Maintenance, which includes:
    - 1. Housing;
    - 2. Meals;
    - 3. Lodging (i.e. hotels, motels, and other transient quarters);
    - 4. Other items required by the client due to their participation in the vocational rehabilitation process.
  - B. Incidental maintenance, which refers to the purchase of necessary personal items not otherwise provided for an individual who is participating in a rehabilitation program away from home.
- 472.1.08 Maintenance shall be paid as follows:
- A. An authorization for either regular or incidental maintenance shall not exceed thirty days at any one time exception as allowed for training away from home lasting over a month;
  - B. The amount authorized for regular maintenance shall depend upon the actual amount of the extra costs incurred by an individual as a result of their



participation in other services. The total amount authorized per month shall not exceed the monthly income amount allowed under Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for a single individual. This total amount allowed includes incidental and regular maintenance combined. Exempt from the limitation to the maximum amount of SSI is maintenance paid for housing for clients of specifically designated employment training programs.

- C. Housing, Meals and Lodging shall not be authorized to clients in Referral, Wait List, or Services Interrupted status or if the individual is not receiving a primary service. They must be in support of another vocational rehabilitation service;
- D. Authorization for housing, meals and authorization for lodging shall not be made simultaneously unless the individual is required to be away from the site of their usual housing and meals or lodging as a part of their vocational rehabilitation program;
- E. Meals may be authorized at a cost not to exceed VR's maximum allowable fee per meal. One meal may be authorized for every seven (7) hours an individual is away from home participating in a primary vocational rehabilitation service. However, up to three (3) meals may be authorized if the individual is away from home participating in a primary vocational rehabilitation service for a twenty four (24) hour period.
- F. The amount authorized for incidental maintenance shall not exceed \$3.00 per day;
- G. An authorization for maintenance shall not exceed thirty (30) days from the date the individual begins employment.
- H. Upon the approval of the supervisor, maintenance may be authorized for an interim period of forced inactivity (i.e. break in service) of thirty days or less. (For example, while the client is between sessions in a training program);
- I. Regularly occurring maintenance shall be paid through the regular authorization/invoice process. Periodic maintenance may be paid through the regular authorization/invoice process or through the Imprest Account as appropriate; Refer to 128.0.00

- 472.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 472.2.01 Maintenance is not intended to pay for those living costs such as food, clothing, or shelter that exist irrespective of one's status as an applicant or client of the VR Program. However, when status as an applicant/client of VR increases the nature of one's living expenses, then maintenance may be appropriate to assist the applicant/client in covering the extra costs of participating in the vocational rehabilitation program.
- 474.0.00 NURSE; AIDE; SITTER  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 474.1.00 POLICY:
- 474.1.01 VR may authorize a private duty nurse, aide or sitter for a qualified individual recovering from surgery.
- 474.1.02 VR shall not authorize a member of the individual's family to provide any service covered by this policy.
- 474.1.03 A written recommendation from the attending physician shall be placed in the case file prior to authorizing the service.
- 474.1.04 A fee may be authorized at the lesser of the following rates:
- A. Program's established fee;
  - B. The prevailing rate within the community; or
  - C. A rate lower than those above negotiated by the counselor with the provider.
- 474.1.05 The provider shall maintain a record of the provision of the service. The record must be signed and dated by the provider and the individual receiving the service. The record shall include:
- A. Individual's name;
  - B. Provider's name and address;

C. Date(s), time(s) and type(s) of service; and

D. Rate per hour and total fee.

- 474.1.06 This service should be restricted to two weeks or less. If more time is anticipated, then convalescent care should be considered. Refer to 460.0.00
- 476.0.00 ORIENTATION, MOBILITY, READER, REHABILITATION  
TEACHING/VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY SERVICES  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018
- 476.1.00 POLICY:
- 476.1.01 VR may authorize or provide orientation, mobility, reader, and rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy services for a client to assist the individual in attainment of the employment goal.
- 476.1.02 The need for orientation and mobility services, reader services, or rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy services must relate to the disability(ies) of the client.
- 476.1.03 VR shall not authorize orientation and mobility instruction, reader or rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy services when:
- A. The individual is receiving service from another authority that is legally responsible to provide a reader or rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy services in connection with its activity or service delivery (When other authorities or institutions are not meeting their responsibilities, shared cost shall be negotiated);
  - B. A member of the individual's family provides the service (see certification requirements needed to provide orientation and mobility and/or rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy services); or
  - C. Comparable benefits are available to provide the needed service(s).
- 476.1.04 Orientation and/or Mobility Instruction

A certified orientation and mobility specialist may provide O&M services through a private community rehabilitation program, a state community rehabilitation program or as an individual contractor.

NOTE: The individual must hold certification from the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) as a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) or must hold a National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC) from the National Blindness Professional Certification Board (NBPCB).

476.1.05 Reader

- A. A maximum of two hours reader service per week per quarter/semester hour scheduled may be authorized. Example: An individual taking three five-hour courses may receive a maximum of thirty (30) hours reader service per week.
- B. A fee for reader service(s) may be authorized at the lesser of the following rates:
  - 1. Minimum hourly wage;
  - 2. The hourly rate established for student employment at the school the individual is attending; or
  - 3. A rate less than those above negotiated by the counselor with the reader.
- C. The individual receiving the service shall maintain a record of the reading time they have been provided. The record must be signed and dated by the reader and the individual, and returned to the counselor. The record shall include:
  - 1. Individual's name;
  - 2. Reader's name and address;
  - 3. Date service started and ended;
  - 4. Subjects read;

5. Date and number of hours for each subject; and
6. Rate per hour and total fee.

D. The individual receiving the service should select the reader when possible.

476.1.06      Rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy service(s). A certified rehabilitation teacher/vision rehabilitation therapist may provide rehabilitation teaching/vision rehabilitation therapy service(s) through a private community rehabilitation program, a state community rehabilitation program or as an independent contractor.

NOTE: The individual must hold certification from the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) as a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT).

476.2.00      INFORMATION:

476.2.01      Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

478.0.00      PERMIT AND/OR OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

478.1.00      POLICY:

478.1.01      VR may authorize an occupational license and/or permit necessary for a client to enter employment in an agreed upon employment goal.

NOTE: VR shall not authorize payment for a permit or occupational license that has been revoked because of illegal activity. (Examples: DUI and suspension of driver's license; Illegal drug activity and suspension of medical license.)

478.1.02      VR shall not authorize the payment of union dues, membership fees or bonding.

478.1.03      VR shall be restricted to authorizing only the initial permit/license.

478.2.00      INFORMATION:

- 478.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 478.2.02 Most licenses and permits must be renewed on a yearly basis. It is not the intent of VR to continually pay for these ongoing needs of the individual. The individual must assume responsibility by carefully preparing for the requirements of the selected employment.
- 478.2.03 An occupational license is defined as any license, permit or other written authority required by a state, city or other governmental unit to be obtained in order to enter an occupation, a small business or self-employment.
- 478.2.04 Care should be exercised before authorizing training or other vocational rehabilitation service(s) leading to work requiring a special license(s) or permit(s) to assure that conditions do not exist which would prohibit the client from securing the necessary license.
- 480.0.00 PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT SERVICES  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001,  
Revised: November 1, 2017
- 480.1.00 POLICY:
- 480.1.01 VR may authorize or provide personal care attendant services for an individual with a significant physical disability to assist in the attainment of their employment goal. The counselor shall provide a rationale in the case notes which justifies the need for assistance.
- 480.1.02 Personal care attendant service will only be considered for an individual if:
- A. a Georgia Waiver has not been made available to the individual,
  - B. the client is receiving services/training out of state because the service or training is not available in state or
  - C. the number of hours needed to participate in a primary VR services, as determined by the AWT Unit Occupational Therapist, exceeds the number of waiver hours funded. In this instance, VR may approve additional hours. The client will need to provide proof that they are on a wait list before an authorization will be made.

- 480.1.03 Personal care attendant services by VR shall be:
- A. Provided by a fully licensed home health care agency; or
  - B. Provided by an individual chosen and hired by the client who has at least a CNA certification; or
  - C. Provided by a Home companion/aid.
- 480.1.04 VR may authorize or provide personal assistance services only as a supportive service that enables the individual with a significant physical disability to participate in a primary vocational rehabilitation service that is away from their customary source of personal assistance. Only those additional costs incurred by an individual as a direct result of participation in their vocational rehabilitation program shall be authorized.
- NOTE: Such personal assistance services, as necessary, may be provided on weekends and holidays for the individual with a significant physical disability to enable him/her to continue participating in a primary vocational rehabilitation service which occurs regularly during weekdays. Personal assistance services shall not be provided for periods of longer than thirty (30) days during breaks in the primary service(s), e.g. summer vacation between spring and fall terms of training.
- 480.1.05 Before initiating Personal Care Attendant Services, the counselor shall consult with the client, the client's medical provider, and the AWT occupational therapist (OT) to determine the type of assistance and level of care required. The number of personal care attendant hours required by each individual shall be determined by AWT OT assessment. This assessment shall include identification of assistive work strategies and devices that may assist the individual. Medical recommendations and the AWT OT assessment shall be documented in the case file.
- 480.1.06 Care conferences (refer to glossary) may be conducted during the provision of personal assistance services in order to review client needs.
- 480.1.07 The counselor shall consult with Provider Management to:
- A. Determine the fee;

- B. Negotiate the payment agreement with the service provider; and
- C. Assist with coordination of benefits.

480.1.08 The fee authorized for personal assistance shall be dependent on the type of personal assistance being provided and shall be consistent with the Program's established fees through consultation with Provider Management.

480.1.09 VR shall not authorize more than eight (8) hours of Personal Care Attendant during any twenty-four (24) hour period unless:

- A. The individual to receive the primary service is living away from home;
- B. A primary VR service requires the individual with a significant physical disability to be away from home overnight; or
- C. A health problem exists which requires other services.

480.1.10 A family member (any relative by blood or marriage or any person living in the same household with whom the individual has a close interpersonal relationship) shall not be paid for personal assistance services. They may be compensated for travel and subsistence if traveling with an individual with a significant physical disability for the purpose of providing personal assistance services so that the individual may receive a primary vocational rehabilitation service.

480.1.11 Travel and subsistence for the personal assistant while traveling with the client in support of the primary service shall be paid up to the rate of reimbursement for state employees.

480.1.12 Personal assistance may be authorized directly to a licensed agency. If personal assistance is being provided by an individual chosen and hired by the client, the personal assistance shall be authorized to the client for payment to their employee.

480.1.13 The provider shall maintain a record of the provision of the service. The record shall be signed and dated by the provider and individual receiving the service. The record shall include the following:



- A. Individual's name;
- B. Provider's name and address;
- C. Date(s), time(s) and type(s) of service; and
- D. Rate per hour and total fee.

- 480.1.14 When one personal assistant is providing services to two (2) or more individuals with significant physical disabilities at the same time and location, VR shall not authorize nor pay double the single hourly rate and travel for the service, but may authorize and pay a negotiated prorated fee for the service.
- 480.1.15 The individual with a significant physical disability, in consultation with the counselor, is responsible for selecting, hiring and supervising the personal assistance service provider in a manner consistent with program requirements.
- 480.1.16 The personal assistance provider shall meet provider qualifications and standards established by VR.
- 480.1.17 Personal assistance services are exempt from financial need requirements.
- 482.0.00 RECOVERY RESIDENCE  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 482.1.00 POLICY:
- 482.1.01 VR may authorize placement in a recovery residence for a qualified individual recovering from alcohol or drug dependency.
- 482.1.02 Placement in a recovery residence may be authorized only for a client who is receiving treatment as a primary rehabilitation service.
- 482.1.03 An authorization for placement in a recovery residence shall be made only to a VR Program approved provider. Provider standards are available from the Office of Provider Management.
- 482.1.04 An authorization for placement in a recovery residence shall not exceed:

A. Thirty days at a time; and

B. The Program's schedule of fees.

482.1.05 The counselor may authorize placement in a recovery residence for up to three months. Additional months may be authorized with supervisor approval not to exceed a combined total of six months.

482.2.00 INFORMATION:

482.2.01 A recovery residence for persons with chemical dependence is a facility providing lodging, meals (or provisions for meals) and a recovery support program for persons making the transition to independent alcohol and drug free living. The focus is on abstinence, restoration, group therapy and extensive use of self-help groups. Vocational and academic issues may also be addressed. Gainful competitive integrated employment is a significant objective of the recovery residence's program. Duration of residency can vary.

482.2.02 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

484.0.00 RELOCATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001

484.1.00 POLICY:

484.1.01 VR may authorize the physical movement of a client's personal goods from one location to another if suitable work has been obtained or promised in writing by an employer.

484.1.02 To qualify for relocation, the place of employment must be a distance greater than fifty (50) miles from the client's residence.

484.1.03 VR may authorize only one (1) relocation for a client.

484.1.04 VR may authorize the initial one (1) time cost of a security deposit and/or charges for the initiation of utilities that are required for an individual to relocate for a job placement. VR may not authorize the further payment of utility bills. Refer to 461.0.00

- 484.1.05 A client who is being relocated at VR expense may be authorized assistance with one (1) month rent at their new location if it is documented as necessary. The amount authorized may not exceed the actual rent or the VR fee for maintenance.
- 484.1.06 The counselor shall verify and document in the case notes the details of the job commitment.
- 484.1.07 If the moving company cost will exceed \$1,000, the counselor must secure three (3) bids from reputable moving companies and utilize the company that submits the lowest bid.
- 484.1.08 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 486.0.00 RESIDENCE MODIFICATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 486.1.00 POLICY:
- 486.1.01 VR may authorize the modification of the residence of a client who has a severe physical disability (ies) only if such modification is essential for the individual's attainment of the employment goal.
- 486.1.02 Only the following structural modifications may be authorized:
- A. A maximum of two (2) exterior doors may be widened per dwelling; however, in keeping with fire code restrictions, the primary egress cannot be made through a garage;
  - B. The addition of a ramp and landing pad, if necessary to give access, to the exterior door;
  - C. The widening of one interior bathroom door;
  - D. Grab bars at the toilet and bath tub/shower if the individual has use of their arms;
  - E. The widening of one interior bedroom door;

- F. The widening of one kitchen door;
- G. Environmental controls, as appropriate; and/or
- H. Other essential modifications as required to participate in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

- 486.1.03 For a residence not owned by the client, the Program must have prior written permission of the property owner that specifies the modification being authorized. This written permission shall be placed in the case file.
- 486.1.04 The client must give their written consent to the recommended modification(s) before it is begun. The consent document shall be placed in the case file.
- 486.1.05 The counselor must provide a rationale in the case notes stating why the modification(s) is necessary to the achievement of the individual's employment goal.
- 486.1.06 Any structural modification(s) to a residence shall be recommended and submitted in writing by the AWT rehabilitation engineer to the counselor for approval. This written recommendation must be included in the case file.
- 486.1.07 Should the cost of a residence modification exceed \$2,500, the counselor shall engage the AWT rehabilitation engineer in securing a minimum of two (2) written bids. The counselor shall assist AWT in the review of qualified bids and in the selection of an appropriate bidder. Client informed choice shall be utilized as appropriate. The lowest qualifying bid should be accepted.

NOTE: The AWT rehabilitation engineer shall determine bidder qualifications.

- 486.1.08 Prior to any VR sponsored residential modification, the client's/homeowner's residence must meet local building codes and be stable structurally (as determined by the AWT engineer or appropriate contractor). It is the client's/homeowner's responsibility to meet these standards prior to or during the VR modification.
- 486.1.09 Subsequent residential modifications may be considered upon review of recent work history, work expectancy, and changes in the nature of the disability (i.e.

exacerbation of existing disability). Reasonable and appropriate policies shall be applied in all cases.

486.2.00 INFORMATION:

486.2.01 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00

490.0.00 SERVICES TO FAMILY MEMBERS

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: May 15, 2018

490.1.00 POLICY:

490.1.01 VR may authorize or provide certain services for members of a client's family when necessary to support the individual in achieving a competitive integrated employment outcome.

490.1.02 In order for a service to be authorized to a family member:

A. The client must be participating in trial work experience(s) or in Service status or above;

B. The needed service must not be available through existing community agencies or programs; and

C. The service(s) must support the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) by contributing to the client's vocational rehabilitation.

490.1.03 The rationale for the authorization of the service(s) for the family member(s) shall be included in the case notes.

490.1.04 The client's name and the provider information shall be typed on the A&I in the usual manner. The family member's name shall not be placed on the A&I.

490.2.00 INFORMATION:

- 490.2.01 Family member includes any relative by blood or marriage or any other person living in the same household with whom the individual has a close interpersonal relationship.
- 490.2.02 Services may include:
- A. Aide training to prepare a family member(s) to assist the individual with a disability in a program of activities of daily living;
  - B. Group counseling to assist the family member(s) in understanding the needs of the individual;
  - C. Child care which enables the individual to participate in another primary rehabilitation service; and/or Refer to 458.0.00
  - D. Assistance with locating suitable housing.
- 490.2.03 Refer to Supportive Services/General 454.0.00
- 492.0.00 TOOLS/EQUIPMENT: OCCUPATIONAL OR MEDICAL  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020  
Authority: O.C.G.A. 49-9-15
- 492.1.00 POLICY:
- 492.1.01 VR may authorize or provide, where appropriate, assistive work technology device(s) and/or equipment sufficient to assess an applicant's ability to benefit from services, and as appropriate, the nature and scope of services needed by an individual participating in trial work experience(s).
- 492.1.02 VR may authorize or provide, where appropriate, assistive work technology device(s), equipment and/or tools necessary for a client to prepare for or to perform the entry level requirements of an occupation indicated by the employment goal. The counselor shall consult with and refer to Assistive Work Technology (AWT) staff whenever assistive work technology devices are being considered. Refer to 456.0.00

- 492.1.03 Medical equipment and/or assistive work technology device(s) shall be prescribed/recommended by a specialist qualified to write prescriptions or make recommendations for the purchase of such equipment or device(s).
- 492.1.04 When an adapted mobility device such as modified golf cart, a Segway, or an all-terrain vehicle is necessary to perform tasks associated with the employment goal (Refer to 402.1.11), the counselor shall consult with the AWT occupational therapist (OT). The AWT OT will provide written recommendations about whether the proposed adapted mobility device is safe and appropriate. The AWT OT may also recommend referral and consultation with either a qualified therapist such as a recreational therapist or physical therapist, or with a certified driver rehabilitation specialist (CDRS), depending on the needs of the client. Other requirements include:
- A. AWT OT consultation, when appropriate, with the AWT rehabilitation engineer for recommendations on specific adaptations required for such mobility devices;
  - B. The client must obtain and required licenses and insurance;
  - C. The counselor shall authorize purchase of an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) helmet if recommended by the AWT OT.
  - D. If an item cannot be adapted or modified and a new item or piece of equipment is recommended for purchase with the adaption or modification, VR will only be responsible for the adaption or modification portion and the client shall be responsible for the remainder.
- 492.1.05 When it has not been conclusively documented that the individual can benefit from an assistive work technology devise(s) or equipment or when it is cost beneficial to the VR Program, the VR Program shall authorize the rental of an item(s) as opposed to authorizing the purchase of the item(s).
- 492.1.06 Purchased item(s) remain the property of VR until:
- A. The established depreciation date has expired at which time the individual becomes sole owner.

- B. If the client contributed any amount to the purchase of the item due to VR financial need assessment and associated cost sharing application, then the item shall become the property of the client unless it exceeds the VR threshold allowance for said item.
- C. Equipment that is not readily transferable for use by another individual is exempt from this policy.

- 492.1.07 A rationale for the purchase of an assistive work technology device(s), equipment and/or occupational tools must be included in the case file. The rationale must state why the item(s) is required by the individual to complete the rehabilitation process as specified in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or amendment.
- 492.1.08 VR staff shall execute a Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities agreement with the individual for removable, transferable, occupational or medical tools, equipment or an assistive work technology device(s) on any item(s) when the cost(s) exceeds \$1,000.00. This agreement shall contain a listing of the client's responsibilities, a list of equipment authorized and the dates that apply to inventory.
- A. A copy of this agreement shall accompany the authorization for tools and equipment and shall be signed by the client when they sign the authorization.
    - 1. A copy of the agreement shall be printed for the client and a copy shall be placed in the case file.
  - B. If a client intentionally disposes of tools and/or equipment while they are still on inventory, such activity can be grounds for case closure.
- 492.1.09 VR staff may transfer occupational or medical tools, equipment or assistive work technology device(s).
- A. The transfer of an item(s) from one individual to another must be documented in the case file of each individual. The receiving VR staff shall execute a new agreement.



- B. When an individual is not using the item(s) for the purpose for which it was originally purchased, VR staff shall require that the individual return any item(s), which can be transferred to another individual. The item(s) may then be transferred to another individual.
- 492.1.10 If any item covered by this policy is stolen or destroyed, the counselor shall:
  - A. Document the circumstances of what happened to the item(s) in the individual's case file;
  - B. If the item(s) was stolen, the client shall report the incident to the local law enforcement officials for investigation and the counselor shall notify the AWT staff and Supervisor.
- 492.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 492.2.01 Equipment shall include such items as computers, software, wheelchairs, closed circuit televisions (CCTVs), recorders, etc.
- 492.2.02 The following time frames can be used to establish depreciation dates which must appear on the Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities agreement. If a specific item is not listed, staff with your supervisor and use these a guidelines to establish time-frames in consultation with AWT and Policy, if appropriate:
  - A. Two-year (2) property: occupational tools to include tools-of-the-trade, hand tools, and small electrical tools, equipment and other such similar items. Also, durable medical equipment, and assistive work technology equipment/devices not elsewhere classified;
  - B. Three-year (3) property: large electrical tools-equipment and other similar items such as manual wheelchairs and computer software and hardware;
  - C. Five-year (5) property: all power wheelchairs; adaptive equipment for vehicles which can be transferred or is removable; video magnifiers such as CCTVs; and alternative augmentative communication devices.
- 493.0.00 TOOLS/EQUIPMENT: COMPUTER, SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, and SMART DEVICES  
Effective Date: July 1, 2020

Authority: O.C.G.A. 49-9-15

493.1.00 POLICY:

493.1.01 VR may authorize or provide, where appropriate, computers, software, hardware, and smart devices sufficient to assess an applicant's ability to benefit from services, and as appropriate, the nature and scope of services needed by an individual participating in trial work experience(s).

493.1.02 VR may authorize or provide, where appropriate, computers, software, hardware, and smart devices necessary for a client to prepare for or to perform the entry level requirements of an occupation indicated by the employment goal. The counselor shall consult with and refer to Assistive Work Technology (AWT) staff whenever assistive work technology devices are being considered. Refer to 456.0.00

493.1.03 A purchased item(s) remain the property of VR until:

- A. The established depreciation date has expired at which time the individual becomes sole owner.
- B. If the client contributed any amount to the purchase of the item due to VR financial need assessment and associated cost sharing application, then the item shall become the property of the client unless it exceeds the VR threshold allowance for said item.
- C. Equipment that is not readily transferable for use by another individual is exempt from this policy.

493.1.04 A rationale for the purchase of an assistive work technology device(s), computers, software, hardware, and smart devices, must be included in the case file. The rationale must state why the item(s) is required by the individual to complete the rehabilitation process as specified in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or amendment.

493.1.05 VR staff shall execute a Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities agreement and the Addition to Tools/Equipment Responsibilities For PC Hardware and Software agreement with the individual for assistive work technology device(s), computers, software, hardware, and smart devices, on any item(s) when the cost(s) exceeds \$500.00.

- 493.1.06 VR staff may transfer assistive work technology device(s), computers, software, hardware, and smart device(s).
- A. The transfer of an item(s) from one individual to another must be documented in the case file of each individual. The receiving VR staff shall execute a new agreement.
  - B. When an individual is not using the item(s) for the purpose for which it was originally purchased, VR staff shall require that the individual return any item(s), which can be transferred to another individual. The item(s) may then be transferred to another individual.
- 493.1.07 If any item covered by this policy is stolen or destroyed, the counselor shall:
- A. Document the circumstances of what happened to the item(s) in the individual's case file;
  - B. If the item(s) was stolen, report the incident to the local law enforcement officials for investigation and notify their supervisor.
- 493.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 493.2.01 Equipment shall include such items as computers, hardware, software, smart device(s), etc. Additional items may be considered in this category based on technological advances and the discretion of VR staff.
- 493.2.02 The following time frames can be used to establish depreciation dates which must appear on the Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities agreement. If a specific item is not listed, use this guideline to establish your own timeframes:
- A. Three-year (3) property: Computers, software, hardware, and smart devices.
- 494.0.00 TRANSPORTATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: October 15, 2010
- 494.1.00 POLICY:
- 494.1.01 VR may authorize assistance with transportation expenses, including fares or travel costs, as well as adequate training in the use of public transportation, necessary for an individual to participate in a primary vocational rehabilitation service(s) at the established VR rate.

- 494.1.02 When the client is not living in their primary residence due to participating in training services, VR may assist with no more than two one-way trips per training period (e.g. quarter/semester). In an emergency situation the supervisor may grant an exception to this policy.
- 496.0.00 TRANSLATOR  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 496.1.00 POLICY:
- 496.1.01 As appropriate, a translator shall be used to ensure that an applicant for, or a recipient of rehabilitation services, whose native language is not English or whose English speaking ability is otherwise limited, is able to avail him/herself of the services offered by the Program.
- 496.1.02 Prior arrangements should be made through volunteers, organizations, churches, consuls and embassies to develop a pool of individuals who can be called upon to translate for non-English speaking individuals. Such a pool should consist of people who are able to translate in languages which represent substantial segments of the population in a region.
- 496.1.03 If the services of a translator cannot be obtained at no cost, the counselor may authorize the service at an hourly rate based on approved fees.
- 496.2.00 INFORMATION
- 496.2.01 Refer to 102.0.00
- 496.2.02 The AT&T language line is an available resource.
- 497.0.00 UNIFORM/OCCUPATIONAL CLOTHING  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: September 1, 2008
- 497.1.00 POLICY:
- 497.1.01 VR may authorize the provision of uniforms or other suitable occupational clothing which is required for an individual to participate in competitive

integrated employment preparation activities including job readiness training, job search and job interviewing. Additionally, clothing may be authorized when necessary for a client to participate in training and/or employment.

497.1.02 A rationale for the purchase of uniforms or other occupational clothing must be included in the case notes. The rationale must state why the item(s) is required. Supervisor approval must be given for total clothing purchases over \$200. All purchases must be appropriate and reasonable. Refer to 124.2.01 and 124.2.02

497.2.00 INFORMATION:

497.2.01 Uniforms and occupational clothing include: single and multi-piece uniforms; work shirts and pants; protective clothing and shoes; and street clothes appropriate for an office environment.

All alternative resources for quality used clothing such as civic and church resources shall be considered before purchasing new clothing items.

498.0.00 VEHICLE MODIFICATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

498.1.00 POLICY:

498.1.01 The counselor may authorize a qualified client to receive modification(s) or assistive work technology device(s), or both, as needed on a vehicle when the vehicle modification(s) is necessary to achieve the client's employment goal. The counselor shall consider the cost effectiveness of the modification(s), i.e., the client's projected job earnings and ability to maintain the equipment in the future. The policy related to appropriate and reasonableness shall be continuously applied. Refer to 124.2.01 and 124.2.02

498.1.02 VR shall not authorize the purchase of any type of motorized vehicle used on public roadways, or provision of any transportation support or assistance to get to and from the designated place of business or to render services related to the business. Motorized vehicles may include the following: automobile, truck, van, scooter, airplane, boat, other powered vehicle, or trailer that requires title and/or licensing by the state. Refer to 402.1.11

498.1.03 Prior to the decision to approve a vehicle modification(s), the counselor shall determine that all of the following criteria are met:

- A. There is no other means of transportation (A vehicle modification(s) cannot be authorized if the client can use public transportation effectively);
- B. The client shall have the means to maintain the vehicle and the modification(s), which includes automobile insurance on both the vehicle and modification(s). The counselor and the AWT rehabilitation engineer shall complete the Financial Consideration for Vehicle Modification Worksheet with the client in order to make this determination;
- C. The vehicle modification(s) is necessary to support the client's participation in their rehabilitation service at the time the modification(s) is purchased. (Example: on campus housing should be considered prior to the authorization of a vehicle modification(s) if it is proposed in order to support attending school, particularly for those who are new students or who are taking remedial classes.)

498.1.04 Prior to the driver evaluation, the counselor shall engage the AWT rehabilitation engineer to conduct a preliminary assessment of the client's readiness to drive independently, or to be transported as a passenger-only. The counselor and AWT rehabilitation engineer shall consider whether the client has reached their maximum medical improvement and can benefit from recommended vehicle modification(s) long term. The client shall provide the counselor a copy of their valid Georgia driver's license or learner's permit and driving history report (MVR) from the Department of Driver Services (DDS) to be used as a part of the AWT preliminary assessment of the client. Staff should also consult with the AWT rehabilitation engineer to determine the appropriateness of the vehicle to be considered for modification(s), either for a vehicle already owned or being considered for purchase.

498.1.05 The counselor shall provide a rationale in the case notes stating why the modification(s) is necessary to achieve the client's employment goal. This rationale shall include the AWT rehabilitation engineer's preliminary assessment report and the Financial Consideration for Vehicle Modification Worksheet.

498.1.06 If the results of the preliminary assessment and Financial Consideration for Vehicle Modification Worksheet support securing a driver evaluation, the counselor shall include in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) the need for driver evaluation and shall engage the AWT rehabilitation engineer to

secure this evaluation from a certified driver rehabilitation specialist (CDRS) and a licensed occupational therapist (OT) of an approved driver evaluation vendor. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the specific type of modification(s) needed, (i.e., which may include adapted driving equipment, or minor or major modification(s)), the practicality of the modification(s) and if the client can drive the adapted vehicle safely in the environment in which the vehicle will be used.

- A. VR shall not accept a driver's evaluation independently obtained by a client without prior oversight of the counselor and the AWT rehabilitation engineer.
- B. The recommendations from the licensed OT and CDRS shall include only those modification(s) that are essential for the client to drive safely or to be transported safely.

498.1.07 VR shall not authorize the modification(s) of an existing van/mini-van/SUV/truck for a client who can be functional in an automobile, except to the extent of what it would cost to equip an automobile. If the client chooses to use a van/mini-van/SUV/truck where such need does not exist, the client shall be responsible for the payment above the cost of equipping an automobile except when a van/mini-van/SUV/truck is their existing primary vehicle and meets the requirements of policy 498.1.10. A SUV can be approved for minor modification(s) only.

- A. The counselor shall determine the need for a van/mini-van modification(s) based on an evaluation by a licensed occupational therapist and CDRS who state that the client/driver cannot transfer in and out of an automobile independently; or
- B. If the client/passenger requests a van/mini-van modification(s) for transportation, with the intent to use another person as the driver, the AWT rehabilitation engineer and/or the AWT OT shall determine whether the client/passenger cannot transfer independently in and out of an automobile as in "A" above. A van/mini-van modification(s) for a client who must use a wheelchair to ride as a passenger-only may be authorized in this situation.

498.1.08 The title to the vehicle to be modified shall be in the client's name or that of an immediate family member.

- 498.1.09 Vehicle modifications are classified as either “minor” or “major”. These two types of modifications are defined as:
- A. Minor modifications include:
1. The installation of equipment such as hand controls, a car-top carrier, or rear carrier;
  2. A van/mini-van modification(s) for a client using a wheelchair to ride as a passenger-only that does not include structural changes to the van/mini-van, such as raising a roof or lowering a floor or part of a floor, or where the client cannot transfer to an automobile but can transfer from a wheelchair to a power seat in order to drive safely and does not include structural changes to the van/mini-van, such as raising a roof or lowering a floor or part of a floor.
- B. Major modifications include:
1. A van/mini-van modification(s) for a client using a wheelchair who must drive from the wheelchair that includes structural changes to the van/mini-van, such as raising a roof or lowering a floor or part of a floor; or
  2. Any other vehicle adaptation that requires altering the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) vehicle’s structure itself.

498.1.10 A full-sized van considered for major modification(s) shall be in good mechanical condition, less than five (5) years old, and with less than 50,000 miles on the odometer. A mini-van considered for major modification(s) shall be in good mechanical condition, less than three (3) years old, and shall have less than 36,000 miles on the odometer. Any minor modification(s) on an older vehicle, where the adapted equipment can be transferred easily, will require only that the vehicle be in good mechanical (safety) condition; the above limitations in mileage and age shall not apply.

NOTE: VR shall not authorize a vehicle modification(s) for a client who already owns a modified vehicle if that vehicle has passed safety inspections performed by an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified mechanic and a National



Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA) certified vehicle modifications vendor.

- 498.1.11 A vehicle shall be determined to be in good mechanical condition in an inspection by an ASE certified mechanic. The auto mechanic shall inspect the mechanical and safety components of the vehicle to assure the vehicle is safe to drive. The client is responsible for making required repairs before the vehicle can be modified. The client is responsible for maintenance on the vehicle, both before and after VR assists in the modification(s).
- 498.1.12 If the driver evaluation supports that a vehicle modification be performed and all above policies have been addressed satisfactorily, the counselor shall include vehicle modification on the IPE and proceed with the service. The counselor shall ensure that all required vehicle modification forms and attachments are signed by the client and that all required documentation is included in the case file prior to the delivery of the modified vehicle. This includes:
- A. Financial Consideration for Vehicle Modification Worksheet;
  - B. Valid Georgia driver's license or learner's license and driving history report (MVR) from Department of Driver Services (DDS);
  - C. IPE Attachment for Transportation Assistance for Vehicle Modifications;
  - D. Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities form and the Addition to Tools/Equipment Responsibilities for Vehicle Modifications and Adapted Driving Equipment form;
  - E. Vehicle Modification Maintenance Agreement (required only on vehicles equipped with high technology driving equipment).
- NOTE: The Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities form establishes the date that vehicle modification(s) is to be removed from state inventory and becomes the property of the client. Vehicle modification(s) shall be the property of the state for five (5) years; this shall be reflected on the Client Tools/Equipment Responsibilities form. Refer to 492.0.00
- 498.1.13 Each vehicle modification(s) shall have a final inspection to ensure that the equipment operates correctly, and that the client can use the equipment

properly and safely. The final inspection shall be conducted by the AWT rehabilitation engineer, the client, the CDRS, and, as available, the counselor. Either prior to but no later than at this inspection, the client shall provide proof of insurance coverage on the vehicle and the adapted driving equipment.

498.1.14 At the time the modified vehicle is delivered, the client shall receive training on the proper use and care of the adapted driving equipment from the CDRS vendor who performed the original driver evaluation. The client shall not drive the vehicle independently until they have obtained a valid driver's license, and is approved and released by the CDRS who provided the original evaluation.

498.2.00 INFORMATION:

498.2.01 The counselor and the AWT rehabilitation engineer shall select an appropriate vendor from the approved National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA). The vendor shall be certified as a NMEDA-QAP (Quality Assurance Program) dealer.

498.2.02 The NMEDA vendor shall provide instructions and written information with regard to the vehicle modification(s) and scheduled maintenance on the adapted equipment.

498.2.03 The Georgia Assistive Technology Law of 1993 (called the Lemon Law) applies to vehicle modifications. Refer to O.C.G.A. § 10-1-870 to 10-1-875.

498.2.04 Refer to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program Outsourcing Services Manual: Vehicle Modification

499.0.00 WORK SITE ACCOMMODATION AND/OR MODIFICATION  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

499.1.00 POLICY:

499.1.01 VR may authorize or provide technical assistance to advise an employer on how to accommodate a work site for a client.

499.1.02 VR may authorize or provide technical assistance to accommodate or modify a work site, as appropriate, for a client to obtain or retain suitable competitive integrated employment. If the individual has not been employed, a letter of

intent to hire from the prospective employer must be in the case file before authorizing any work site accommodation and/or modification.

- 499.1.03 Work site accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) shall not be authorized when the employer or other authority is legally responsible under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to provide such accommodation(s) and/or modification(s).
- 499.1.04 VR may only authorize a work site accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) for a client when the employer or another apparent entity cannot provide it. A rationale to this effect shall be in the case file.
- 499.1.05 A work site accommodation and/or modification may consist of any appropriate selection of the following:
- A. A ramp and landing pad;
  - B. Widening of one entrance and/or one bathroom door;
  - C. Environmental controls;
  - D. Ergonomic redesign of work space;
  - E. Occupational equipment, tools and/or assistive work technology device(s);  
Refer to 492.0.00 and 456.0.00
  - F. An accessible parking place;
  - G. Adjustments to one each of electronic switches such as elevator buttons and security pass locks; and/or
  - H. Other essential modifications, as appropriate to the needs of the individual in the work site.
- 499.1.06 The counselor and/or Employment Specialist must provide a rationale in the case notes stating why the accommodation and/or modification is necessary to the achievement of the individual's employment goal.

- 499.1.07 When considering accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) to a work site, a Program approved assistive work technology service provider should be consulted when appropriate. Such recommendation(s) shall be included in the case file.
- 499.1.08 The counselor shall document in the case file that any accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) which will alter the facility have been discussed and approved in writing by appropriate management personnel at the work site before the accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) is made.
- 499.1.09 Written documentation shall be provided in the case file that the client's immediate supervisor has consented to the accommodation(s) and/or modification(s).
- 499.1.10 The counselor and/or Employment Specialist should notify the service provider in writing that all work must meet applicable building codes and must satisfy both VR and the employer.

# **Section 500.0.00**

## **Case Closure**

**SECTION 500.0.00**  
**CASE CLOSURE**  
**CONTENTS**

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## **SECTION 500.0.00 CASE CLOSURE**

- 502.0.00 Case Closed General  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
- 502.1.00 POLICY:
- 502.1.01 An individual's case shall be closed or when further Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are no longer appropriate, reasonable, or anticipated in the immediate future for the vocational rehabilitation of the individual.
- 502.1.02 An individual's case shall not be closed prior to VR making an eligibility determination unless the applicant declines to participate in or is unavailable to complete an assessment due to an intervening reason.
- 502.1.03 If a client receiving vocational rehabilitation services is underemployed, services including job search and placement assistance shall not be discontinued until the employment goal specified in the individual's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is reached. If the employment goal is no longer appropriate, a plan amendment shall be developed. Refer to 504.1.03
- 502.1.04 A case may be closed from any status for an ineligibility reason only after full consultation with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's authorized representative, or after giving a clear opportunity, as documented in the case history, for this consultation.
- 502.1.05 The justification for the case closure recorded in the case notes shall be consistent with VR policy. Case file documentation shall reflect a pattern of informed choices made by the client throughout the rehabilitation process.
- 502.1.06 A notice of change shall be sent, as appropriate, prior to the closure of a case. Refer to 136.1.03
- 502.1.07 The applicant/client shall be notified of any closure, except as noted in 506.1.01, 518.1.02D1 and 518.1.02E, using the VR's Notice of Change form.

502.1.08 The Determination of Ineligibility shall contain a summary of services provided to the client whose case is being closed.

NOTE: The requirement for the provision of trial work experience(s) applies only to cases closed from the Trial Work Experience(s) status due to severity of disability though similar services may have been provided to clients with cases in other statuses.

502.1.09 The case notes shall be used to document justification for closure and discussions or efforts to discuss those justifications with the client or the client's representative.

504.0.00 SUCCESSFULLY REHABILITATED  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

504.1.00 POLICY:

504.1.01 A case may be closed Successfully Rehabilitated from Employed status when an individual with a disability has been, at a minimum:

- A. Determined to be qualified for vocational rehabilitation services; and
- B. Provided the essential vocational rehabilitation services of assessment for determining eligibility and identification of vocational rehabilitation needs; and
- C. Provided appropriate and substantial vocational rehabilitation services in accordance with the IPE which have contributed to the employment outcome; and
- D. Determined to have achieved and maintained a suitable employment goal for at least ninety (90) consecutive days.

NOTE: If the specific occupation changes, a plan amendment is required. Refer to 310.0.00

504.1.02 The requirement that a client be employed ninety (90) consecutive days prior to closure is the minimum requirement mandated by law. Should job changes



occur during this 90 days, follow up services shall be provided for a sufficient period of time to ensure the client's satisfactory adjustment to the employment.

- 504.1.03 If a client receiving vocational rehabilitation services is underemployed (i.e. placed in a job that is not consistent with the individual's IPE, which is based on the individual's unique strengths, priorities, resources, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice), the case shall not be closed successfully rehabilitated.
- 504.1.04 Volunteer work is not an acceptable competitive integrated employment outcome.
- 504.1.05 Competitive Integrated Employment is employment, including supported and customized, in a location typically found in the community where the client interacts for the purpose of performing the duties of the position with other employees, to the same extent that employees without disabilities in comparable positions interact with these persons. This work is compensated at a rate comparable to the customary rate paid to those without disabilities and the client is eligible for the same benefits afforded to other employees. The client with the disability must be eligible for the same opportunities for advancement as are available to employees without disabilities in similar positions. Special conditions may apply for those who are self-employed.

A. There are four (4) types of competitive integrated employment outcomes. The circumstances determine which definition is met.

1. Employment is competitive work in an integrated work setting.
2. Supported Employment is competitive work in an integrated work setting, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual with a most significant disability, with ongoing and extended support services. Refer to 416.0.00
3. Business Enterprise Program is employment in state-agency managed business enterprises by persons with significant visual disabilities. Refer to 412.0.00

4. Self-Employment is working for oneself in the individual's home, shop, or office selling goods or services for the purpose of making a profit.  
Refer to 414.0.00

504.1.06 Prior to a case being closed successfully rehabilitated with a competitive integrated employment outcome, all of the following criteria, in addition to those in 504.1.01 A through D, shall be verified:

- A. The individual and the vocational rehabilitation staff agree the individual is performing well in the competitive integrated employment;
- B. The employment is full-time or, if appropriate, part-time, in an integrated setting;
- C. The individual is compensated at or above minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled; and
- D. The employment is consistent with the individual's strengths, priorities, resources, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

504.1.07 When a case is closed as Successfully Rehabilitated the case record shall contain the following information:

- A. The client's specific occupation, as listed in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET);
- B. The name and address of the employer;
- C. The client's gross weekly earnings and number of hours worked the week of closure;
- D. Indication of medical insurance;
- E. Indication of insurance availability through employer;
- F. Indication of discussion with client regarding the client's need for extended support services to be provided or arranged through cooperative agreements with other service providers;

G. Identification of the services contributing to employment; and

H. In competitive integrated employment:

1. Documentation that a VR staff member verified the individual is employed at or above minimum wage in an integrated work setting; and
2. The individual's wages and level of benefits are not less than those paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by non-disabled individuals.
  - a. Documentation of the client's employment status must be collected in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit; and
  - b. Documentation of the client's quarterly earnings must be obtained during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter after exit.

- 504.1.08 Rationale for primary IPE service(s) provided the client and how the service(s) contributed to employment shall be documented in the case notes.
- 504.1.09 The competitive integrated employment outcome shall be verified on the day of closure.
- 504.1.10 Notice to the client is required. Refer to 136.1.03 and 502.1.06
- 504.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 504.2.01 Examples of documentation may include the following:
- A. Pay Stubs – minimum of two
  - B. IRS Form 941 – employer's quarterly tax return
  - C. Employment verification on company letterhead
  - D. Follow-up survey
  - E. Detailed case notes verified by employer, signed by counselor, if allowed by program
  - F. Commission worksheets

G. Automated database match

H. Self-employment worksheet

I. State directory of new hires

J. FEDES

504.2.02 Documentation method must be the same to verify employment and wages within a quarter.

506.0.00 CASE CLOSED FROM REFERRAL STATUS

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

506.1.00 POLICY:

506.1.01 An individual's case shall be closed from Referral status when the individual meets one of the ineligibility or intervening reasons as specified below. Since the referral has not progressed to Application status, a determination of ineligibility is not required. No notice to the individual is required.

506.1.02 When closing a case from Referral status, the case file shall contain a clear rationale supported by case file documentation of how the determination of ineligibility was reached, or the intervening reason which prevents a determination of eligibility. Refer to 518.1.01 and 518.1.02.

506.1.03 Even though policy permits case closure for ineligibility reasons, when indicated, an application should be taken and appropriate data collected before a determination is made.

508.0.00 CASE CLOSED FROM APPLICATION STATUS

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

508.1.00 POLICY:

508.1.01 An individual's case shall be closed from Application status when the applicant/client meets one of the ineligibility or intervening reasons specified in this topic. Notice to the applicant is required except when the applicant has

died or residence is unknown. Refer to 136.1.13F

- 508.1.02 When closing a case from Application status, the case file shall contain either a Determination of Ineligibility or documentation of the intervening reason which prevents determination of ineligibility. Refer to 216.0.00, 518.1.01, and 518.1.02.
- 510.0.00 CASE CLOSED FROM TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE(S)  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020
- 510.1.00 POLICY:
- 510.1.01 An individual's case shall be closed from Trial Work Experience(s) status when the applicant/client is found to be ineligible based on the severity of their disability or an intervening reason prevents eligibility/ineligibility determination.
- 510.1.02 The applicant may be determined ineligible only after the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for the limited purpose of determining the applicant's/client's ability to benefit from services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Further, it shall have been demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence, which shall include the provision of trial work experience(s) (if the individual is able to participate in trial work experience), that the applicant/client is incapable of benefiting from such services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Refer to 212.0.00
- 510.1.03 When closing a case from Trial Work Experience(s), the case file shall contain either a Determination of Ineligibility for Disability too Severe or a rationale for closure due to an intervening reason. A notice to the individual is required except when the applicant has died or residence is unknown. Refer to 518.1.02D1 & E. and to Glossary: Clear and Convincing Evidence.
- 512.0.00 CASE CLOSED – OTHER THAN REHABILITATED  
Effective Date: October 1, 2001  
Revised Date: July 1, 2021
- 512.1.00 POLICY:
- 512.1.01 A case shall be Closed-Other Than Rehabilitated from any status when, after the initiation of planned service(s), the client meets one of the ineligibility or

intervening reasons as specified in 518.1.00. A notice to the client is required except where the individual is deceased or cannot be located.

512.1.02 When closing a case ineligible, the case file shall contain a Determination of Ineligibility. When it has been determined that case closure is warranted due to an intervening reason, the reason shall be documented in the case file. Refer to 518.1.01 and 518.1.02.

514.0.00

516.0.00 CASE CLOSED WAIT LIST  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

516.1.00 POLICY:

516.1.01 An individual's case shall be closed from the Wait List:

A. The individual requests that their case be closed; or

B. The counselor determines the client is no longer eligible; or

C. Due to an intervening reason, which prevents the further consideration of delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. Refer to 518.1.02.

Note: Refer to 418.0.00 for Information and Referral.

518.0.00 CLOSURE REASONS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: July 1, 2020

518.1.00 POLICY:

518.1.01 The Definitions for Ineligibility Reasons for Closure are:

A. Ineligible-No impairment or impediment to employment

The individual was found to have no disabling condition, no impediment to employment, or did not require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment.

**B. Ineligible– Following Trial Work Experience(s)**

Following Trial Work Experience(s), the individual was determined ineligible because the individual was unable to benefit due to the severity of their disability. The case file reflects that VR has demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the individual cannot benefit from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome. Refer to Glossary: Clear and Convincing Evidence.

NOTE: If a case is from Trial Work Experience(s) status, trial work experience(s) must have been provided unless the individual was unable to participate in the trial work experience. Documentation must be in the case file.

**C. Ineligible – No longer eligible**

The individual was determined eligible for the VR program; however, the individual was no longer eligible because he or she no longer wished to seek competitive integrated employment or the individual's disability prevented the individual's ability to seek competitive integrated employment.

**D. Ineligible – Section 511**

The individual applied for VR services pursuant to section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act and was determined ineligible because they did not wish to pursue competitive integrated employment.

**518.1.02 The Definitions for Intervening Reasons for Closure are:**

**A. Health/Medical**

Individual has been hospitalized or receiving medical treatment that is expected to last longer than ninety (90) days and precludes entry into competitive integrated employment or continued participation in the program.

**B. Reserve Forces Called to Active Duty**

Individual is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least ninety (90) days.

C. No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services

The case file reflects that the individual actively chose not to participate or continue in the VR Program. This is also used when an individual's actions make it impossible to begin or continue in the VR program. This may include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.

D. Unable to Locate or Contact:

1. If unable to locate, the case file reflects that the counselor does not know where the individual is residing as the result of at least one letter being returned from the post office, or the counselor obtains information from significant others indicating the individual no longer resides at case file address(es) and there are no known forwarding addresses.
2. If unable to contact, the case file reflects that the counselor has attempted to contact the individual on at least two occasions and the individual does not respond. At least one of the efforts to contact the individual shall be in writing. The written contacts shall not include the Notice of Change letter.

E. Death of Individual

The case file reflects the applicant/client is no longer living.

F. Criminal Offender

The case file reflects that the individual entered a correctional institution (e.g. prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center) or other institution designed for confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

G. Transferred to another state agency

The case file reflects that the individual needs services more appropriately obtained elsewhere. Transfer to another agency indicates that appropriate referral information is forwarded to the other agency so that agency may provide services more effectively. Include individuals transferred to other VR agencies.

H. All other reasons



Services were obtained or were attempted to be obtained through misrepresentation, fraud, collusion, or criminal conduct on the part of the applicant/client/or client's representative (individual). In such instances, the case will be closed and services may be terminated immediately if the individual has done one or more of the following:

1. Intentionally provided inaccurate or incomplete information to the VR Program, or
2. Intentionally misused program services, funds, or properties; or
3. Committed criminal conduct, including but not limited to threats against GVRA staff.

Services will not be provided for a period of one (1) year following closure unless restitution is made to the VR Program. Refer to Glossary: Criminal Act

I. Extended Employment

Individuals who received services and were placed in a non-integrated or sheltered setting for a public or private nonprofit agency or organization that provides compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (34 CFC 361.(c)(18)).

J. Extended Services Not Available

Individual has received VR services but requires long term extended services for which no long term source of funding is available. This is only for individuals who have received VR services.

K. Short Term Basis Period

The individual achieved supported employment in integrated employment, but did not earn a competitive wage after exhausting the short-term basis period.

# **Section 600.0.00**

## **Impairments**

**SECTION 600.0.00**  
**IMPAIRMENTS**  
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**SECTION 600.0.00**  
**IMPAIRMENTS**

602.0.00    IMPAIRMENTS/GENERAL

Effective Date: October 1, 2002

Revised Date: July 1, 2020

602.1.00    POLICY:

602.1.01    VR accepts as an impairment any medically determinable condition which meets all criteria of the first basic requirement of eligibility (Refer to 214.1.03) if:

- A. The diagnosis is medically or psychologically recognized as a physical or mental impairment; and
- B. Documentation of the impairment is from an acceptable source, i.e. a specialist in the appropriate field (Refer to 602.1.03); and
- C. Documentation of the impairment, regardless of age, reflects the current level of functioning of the individual (Refer to 208.1.02C); and
- D. The diagnosed condition is not specifically excluded by VR from being considered as a recognizable impairment. The conditions that the Program does not recognize as impairments include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Routine dental conditions; Refer to 428.1.07
  - 2. Controlled Hypertension;
  - 3. Nicotine dependence;
  - 4. Sleepwalking;

5. Paraphilic disorders, sexual dysfunction disorders, or gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, or other sexual behavior disorders;

Note: Services for which an individual may otherwise be eligible shall never be denied on the basis of discrimination due to sexual orientation.

6. Substance-related and addictive disorders resulting from the current illegal use of drugs or the current use of alcohol.
7. Compulsive gambling, kleptomania, or pyromania;
8. Pain relating to any area of the body, excluding migraine or cluster headaches. Pain is considered a symptom.

602.1.02 The counselor shall obtain such documentation as necessary to establish the presence of an impairment. Such documentation shall be obtained from an acceptable source and shall reflect the individual's current level of functioning. Refer to 602.1.03

602.1.03 The following impairments require documentation from the following specialists for determination of eligibility to be based on the specified impairment:

A. AIDS:

1. Internist; certified and skilled in infectious diseases or immunology;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Other physician skilled in the diagnosis of HIV.
4. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of HIV (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

B. Alcohol or Drug Dependency:

1. Physician (MD or DO)

2. Psychologist;
3. Psychiatrist;
4. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Alcohol or Drug Dependency (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)
5. Licensed Clinical Social Worker
6. Licensed Professional Counselor

C. Amputation:

1. Counselor observation;
2. Internist or specialist in the field of circulatory problems if diabetes is suspected.

D. Arthritis:

1. Rheumatologist;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Internist; certified and skilled in rheumatology;
4. Orthopedist;
5. Physiatrist;
6. Occupational therapist if the evaluation notes contain a diagnosis from the referring physician.
7. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Arthritis (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

E. Asthma:

1. Allergist;
2. Internist; certified and skilled in disorders of pulmonology or allergies;
3. Physician specializing in pulmonary diseases;
4. Specialist in family practice.
5. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Asthma (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

F. Behavioral Health Disorders/General:

1. Licensed psychologist;
2. Psychiatrist;
3. Psychometrist employed by the Department of Education who is certified as either:
  - a) School psychologist (doctorate level); or
  - b) Associate school psychologist (specialist level); or
  - c) School psychometrist (masters level).
4. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Physician Assistant working in a public mental health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Behavioral Health Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)
5. Licensed Clinical Social Worker skilled in the diagnosis of Behavioral Health Disorders
6. Licensed Professional Counselor

G. Burn:

1. Burn specialist;
2. Plastic surgeon;
3. Orthopedist;
4. Dermatologist;
5. Specialist in family practice;
6. Internist;
7. Treating physician;
8. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Burns (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)
9. Counselor observation.

H. Cancer:

1. Oncologist;
2. Radiologist;
3. Pathologist;
4. Physician skilled in the specialty of the particular body system suspected of containing the malignancy;
5. Internist certified and skilled in Oncology;

I. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder:

1. Pulmonary specialist;
2. Internist; certified and skilled in Pulmonary Disorders;



3. Allergist;
4. Specialist in family practice;
5. Thoracic surgeon;
6. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Chronic Pulmonary Disorder (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

J. Deaf-Blind Disorder:

1. Helen Keller National Center; or
2. The specific specialist used to determine Hearing and Visual Disorders. Refer to 602.1.03 P and Z

K. Diabetes:

1. Endocrinologist;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Internist certified and skilled in the diagnosis of Endocrine Disorders;
4. Pediatrician, if age appropriate.
5. Advanced Practice Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Diabetes (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

L. Endocrine Disorder:

1. Endocrinologist;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Internist certified and skilled in Endocrine Disorders;

4. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Endocrine Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

M. End-Stage Renal Disease:

1. Nephrologists;
2. Internist certified and skilled in Nephrology;
3. Urologist;
4. Specialist in family practice.
5. Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of End–Stage Renal Disease (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

N. Facial Deformity:

1. Endocrinologist;
2. Plastic surgeon;
3. Birth Defect Clinic;
4. Counselor observation.

O. Gynecological disorder:

1. Gynecologist;
2. General surgeon;
3. Advanced Practiced Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Gynecological Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

P. Hearing Disorder:

1. Licensed Audiologist

Q. Heart Disorder:

1. Cardiologist;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Internist certified and skilled in Cardiology;
4. Cardiac surgeon.

R. Hypertension:

1. Cardiologist;
2. Specialist in family practice;
3. Internist certified and skilled in Cardiology, Interventional Cardiology or Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology;
4. Physician skilled in the diagnosis;
5. Neurologist.
6. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Hypertension (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

S. Neurodevelopmental Disorders: (Specific Learning Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders)

1. Licensed psychologist;
2. Psychologist or psychometrist who has been countersigned by a licensed psychologist;

3. Psychologist or psychometrist employed by the state Department of Education who is certified as either:
  - a. School psychologist (doctorate level); or
  - b. Associate school psychologist (specialist level); or
  - c. School psychometrist (masters level)
4. Psychiatrist with the ability to individually administer and interpret general intelligence tests.
5. Licensed Clinical Social Worker skilled in the diagnosis of Learning Disorders
6. Pediatrician skilled in the diagnosis of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (for ADHD Only)
7. Licensed Professional Counselor

T. Neurological Disorder:

1. Neurologist;
2. Neurosurgeon;
3. Pediatric neurologist;
4. Physiatrist;
5. Physician skilled in the diagnosis of the Neurological Disorder.

U. Obesity:

1. Physician
2. Counselor observation

V. Orthopedic disorder:

1. Orthopedist;
2. Orthopedic surgeon;
3. Physiatrist;
4. Other physician skilled in the diagnosis of the particular disorder.
5. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Orthopedic Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

W. Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Brain Injury:

1. Neurologist;
2. Neurosurgeon;
3. Neuropsychologist;
4. Physiatrist.

X. Urological Disorder:

1. Urologist;
2. Nephrologist;
3. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Urological Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)
4. Internist certified and skilled in Nephrology (kidney) related disorders

Y. Vascular Disorder:

1. Internist certified and skilled in Cardiology;
2. Cardiologist;

3. Specialist in family practice;
4. Vascular surgeon;
5. Physician skilled in the particular Vascular Disorder;
6. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse or Physician Assistant working in a public health setting and skilled in the diagnosis of Vascular Disorders (Refer to Glossary: Public Health Setting)

Z. Visual Disorder:

1. Ophthalmologist;
2. Optometrist;
3. Counselor observation

602.2.00 INFORMATION:

602.2.01 Any impairment will involve one or more of the following body systems or groups of disorders:

- A. Musculoskeletal System;
- B. Respiratory System;
- C. Special Senses and Speech;
- D. Cardiovascular System;
- E. Digestive System;
- F. Genito-Urinary System;
- G. Hemic and Lymphatic System;
- H. Skin;

- I. Endocrine System and Obesity;
- J. Neurological;
- K. Behavioral Health Disorders;
- L. Neurodevelopmental Disorders;
- M. Neoplastic Diseases, Malignant;
- N. Immune System.

- 602.2.02 There are some medical and psychological impairments which shall require special procedural considerations. These considerations are discussed within the section pertaining to the appropriate body system or group of disorders. The list of disorders in this section are not inclusive.
- 602.2.03 The counselor should utilize medical consultations, team staffings, and appropriate reference material (such as the Merck Manual, the DSM, Steadman's Medical Dictionary, and other pertinent guides on disability and disease), as needed, to assure that they adequately understands the diagnostic, treatment and rehabilitation considerations for a given impairment, particularly when multiple body systems may be affected.
- 604.0.00 **MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM**  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018
- 604.1.00 **POLICY:**
- 604.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a musculoskeletal impairment.
- 604.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 604.2.00 **INFORMATION:**

- 604.2.01 Musculoskeletal disorders include but are not limited to the following:
- A. Active rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, gouty arthritis, and post-traumatic arthritis;
  - B. Arthritis of a major weight-bearing joint or a major joint of the upper extremities (due to any cause);
  - C. Disorders of the cervical or dorsilumbar spine, including arthritis, osteoporosis, spondylolisthesis, or other vertebrogenic disorders (e.g. herniated disc, spinal stenosis, or degenerative disc disease), chronic back strain and chronic low back syndrome;
  - D. Severe congenital or acquired facial deformity;
  - E. Temperomandibular joint disorders (TMJ);
  - F. Osteomyelitis or septic arthritis;
  - G. Amputation or anatomical deformity which produces substantial impediment to employment.
- 604.2.02 There is a wide range of treatments for musculoskeletal disorders, including medication, injections, bracing and supporting, physical and occupational therapy, and various surgeries. Refer to 428.0.00, 124.0.00, and 126.0.00
- 606.0.00 RESPIRATORY SYSTEM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 606.1.00 POLICY:
- 606.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a respiratory impairment.
- 606.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.



606.2.00 INFORMATION:

606.2.01 Respiratory disorders include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Obstructive airway disease (e.g. emphysema, chronic bronchitis bronchiectasis, extrinsic and intrinsic asthma, and cystic fibrosis);
- B. Restrictive pulmonary disorders with primary loss of lung volume (e.g. pulmonary resection, thoracoplasty, and chest cage deformity, as in kyphoscoliosis or obesity);
- C. Infiltrative interstitial disorders (e.g. diffuse pulmonary fibrosis);
- D. Disorders involving the pulmonary circulation (e.g. primary pulmonary hypertension, recurrent thromboembolic disease, primary or secondary pulmonary vasculitis) which may produce pulmonary vascular hypertension and eventual pulmonary heart disease (cor pulmonale);
- E. Chronic infection, caused most frequently by mycobacterial or mycotic organisms, which produces extensive and progressive lung destruction;
- F. Severe, chronic respiratory allergies.

606.2.02 In cases of allergy or asthma, consideration should be given to the frequency, degree, and duration of symptomatic episodes when assessing the disabling significance of these conditions.

608.0.00 VISION, HEARING AND SPEECH  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

608.1.00 POLICY:

608.1.01 VR may provide services for a client with an impairment of vision and/or hearing and/or speech.

608.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current functioning of the individual.

NOTE: A visual examination by an ophthalmologist or an optometrist, which specifically investigates visual dysfunction associated with hearing loss, may be necessary for an applicant who is identified as deaf. Besides desiring to preserve the other sense, there may be hereditary factors, such as Usher's Syndrome, that would have bearing on training and employment.

608.1.03 Visual impairments must be established on the functioning of the better eye with best correction. An impairment of legal blindness or visual impairment may be established if the individual meets one of the following criteria:

A. Legal blindness may be established if:

1. The individual has a central visual acuity for distance of 20/200 or poorer; or
2. The individual, in whom best corrected visual acuity is better than 20/200, has a central field of vision no greater than 20 degrees in its widest diameter.

B. Visual impairment may be established if:

1. The individual has a central visual acuity for distance of no better than 20/60; or
2. The individual has a contraction of the visual field of twenty (20) degrees or less from the point of fixation, meaning the individual has a central field of vision no greater than forty (40) degrees; or
3. The individual has other ocular or neurological pathologies diagnosed by an appropriate medical provider which result in a significant impairment of visual functioning and a significant impediment to employment.

608.1.04 Low vision aids may be authorized if determined necessary to achieve the employment goal. Assistive Work Technology staff shall be consulted when determining the appropriateness of low vision aids. Refer to 456.0.00

608.1.05 An impairment of deaf-blind disorder may be established if the individual meets either A or B as follows:

- A. If the individual can be appropriately tested for both vision and hearing and meets the definition of legal blindness in 608.1.03A;
- B. If the individual cannot be appropriately tested for either vision or hearing because of the severity of other disabilities, a diagnosis of the impairment with recommendations, as appropriate, from the proper specialist may be substituted for the test results and it shall be assumed that the individual meets eligibility criteria for hearing loss and the criteria outlined in 608.1.03.

Note: For individuals with deaf-blind disorder, the Helen Keller National Center regional representative can provide valuable consultation.

- 608.1.06 A disorder of speech may be established if the capacity to use expressive language is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in speech, such as articulation and/or voice, and/or using spoken language.
- 608.1.07 Disorders of vision, hearing and speech include but are not limited to
  - A. Hearing loss;
  - B. Disturbance of labyrinthine-vestibular function (including Meniere's disease)
  - C. Deafness;
  - D. Auditory Processing Disorder;
  - E. Auditory Neuropathy
  - F. Total bilateral opthalmoplegia
  - G. Cortico-visual Impairment;
  - H. Hemianopic Defect;
  - I. Organic Loss of Speech

J. Impaired Articulation

K. Stuttering

L. Language Impairment; or

M. Any substantial vision, hearing, or speech impairment resulting from congenital conditions; degenerative or infectious diseases; accidents, injuries or poisoning.

610.0.00      **CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM**  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

610.1.00      **POLICY:**

610.1.01      VR may provide services for a client with an impairment of the cardiovascular system.

610.1.02      VR shall not authorize a heart transplant.

610.1.03      Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.

610.2.00      **INFORMATION:**

610.2.01      There are two general categories of cardiac disorder, congenital and acquired.

610.2.02      Cardiovascular disorders include but are not limited to the following:

A. Chronic heart failure;

B. Hypertensive cardiovascular disease;

C. Ischemic heart disease;

D. Recurrent arrhythmias;

E. Symptomatic congenital heart disease;

F. Valvular heart disease or other stenotic defects or valvular regurgitation;

G. Cardiomyopathies;

H. Cardiac transplantation;

I. Aneurysm of aorta or major branches (due to any cause);

J. Peripheral arterial disease.

610.2.03 Cardiovascular impairment results from one or more of four consequences of heart disease:

A. Chronic heart failure or ventricular dysfunction;

B. Discomfort or pain due to myocardial ischemia, with or without necrosis of heart muscle;

C. Syncope, or near syncope, due to inadequate cerebral perfusion from any cardiac cause such as obstruction of flow or disturbance in rhythm or conduction resulting in inadequate cardiac output; and/or

D. Central cyanosis due to right-to-left shunt, arterial de-saturation, or pulmonary vascular disease.

610.2.04 Impairment from diseases of arteries and veins may result from disorders of the vasculature in the central nervous system, eyes, kidney, and other organs.

610.2.05 Primary (or “essential”) hypertension, in which there is no related end-organ damage, would not generally produce functional limitations that would constitute an impediment to employment.

612.0.00 DIGESTIVE SYSTEM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

612.1.00 POLICY:

- 612.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a digestive system impairment.
- 612.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 612.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 612.2.01 Digestive system disorders include but are not limited to:
- A. Peptic ulcer disease (where the ulcer condition is not acute or of an emergency nature);
  - B. Chronic liver disease (e.g. portal, post-necrotic, or biliary cirrhosis; chronic active hepatitis; or Wilson's disease);
  - C. Stricture, stenosis or obstruction of the esophagus;
  - D. Chronic ulcerative or granulomatous colitis;
  - E. Severe weight loss or recurrent upper gastrointestinal hemorrhage due to any persisting gastrointestinal disorder.
- 614.0.00 GENITO-URINARY SYSTEM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 614.1.00 POLICY:
- 614.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a genito-urinary system impairment.
- 614.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 614.1.03 In cases of end-stage renal disease, the treatment facility, social worker, or administrator, as well as the individual's vendor for home dialysis supplies, shall be notified in writing when the individual's case is ready for closure.

- 614.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 614.2.01 Genito-urinary system disorders include but are not limited to:  
Chronic nephritis;
- A. Nephrolithiasis;
  - B. Polycystic disease;
  - C. Bilateral hydronephrosis;
  - D. Hypertensive vascular disease with associated renal impairment;
  - E. End-stage renal disease;
  - F. Nephrotic syndrome.
- 614.2.02 VR's program is not intended to be a long-term health maintenance program. Provision of long-term purchased services for an individual who is on dialysis or is status post-transplant must not be undertaken.
- 614.2.03 Most gynecological disorders do not have associated functional limitations which result in an impediment to employment. Such an impediment must be clearly documented.
- 616.0.00 HEMIC AND LYMPHATIC SYSTEM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 616.1.00 POLICY:
- 616.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with an impairment of the hemic and lymphatic system.
- 616.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 616.2.00 INFORMATION:

616.2.01 Hemic and lymphatic system disorders include but are not limited to:

- A. Chronic anemia;
- B. Sickle cell disease, or one of its variants;
- C. Chronic thrombocytopenia;
- D. Hereditary telangiectasia;
- E. Polycythemia vera;
- F. Myelofibrosis;
- G. Leukemia;
- H. Chronic granulocytopenia;
- I. Myeloma;
- J. Aplastic anemia or hematological malignancies.

618.0.00 SKIN  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

618.1.00 POLICY:

618.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a skin disorder.

618.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.

618.2.00 INFORMATION:

618.2.01 Disorders of the skin include but are not limited to:



- A. Exfoliative dermatitis, ichthyosis, ichthyosiform erythroderma;
- B. Pemphigus, erythema, multiforme bullosum, bullous pemphigoid, dermatitis herpetiformis;
- C. Deep mycotic infections;
- D. Psoriasis, atopic dermatitis, dyshidrosis;
- E. Hydradenitis suppurative, acne conglobata;
- F. Severe burns.

618.2.02 Considerations for impairments involving the skin include:

- A. Skin lesions may result in a marked, long-lasting impairment if they involve extensive body areas or critical areas such as the hands or feet and become resistant to treatment;
- B. The treatment for some skin diseases may require the use of high dosages of drugs with possible serious side effects. These side effects should be considered in the overall assessment of the impairment;
- C. Certain skin lesions are associated with systemic disease and/or involve more than one body system (e.g. systemic lupus erythematosus, scleroderma, and severe burns). In such cases, the counselor should factor in all manifestations when assessing the degree of impairment.

620.0.00 ENDOCRINE SYSTEM AND OBESITY

Effective Date: October 1, 1999

Revised March 1, 2013

620.1.00 POLICY:

620.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with an endocrine system disorder or obesity.

- 620.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 620.1.03 Endocrine system disorders involve glands and hormones and include but are not limited to the following:
- A. Thyroid disorders;
  - B. Hyperparathyroidism;
  - C. Hypoparathyroidism;
  - D. Neurohypophyseal insufficiency (diabetes insipidus);
  - E. Hyperfunction of the adrenal cortex;
  - F. Diabetes mellitus (with related neuropathy), acidosis, diabetic necrosis, and or retinitis proliferans.
- 620.1.04 An impairment of obesity may be established only if the individual is diagnosed as morbidly obese. Refer to Glossary: Morbid Obesity
- 622.0.00 **NEUROLOGICAL**  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999
- 622.1.00 **POLICY:**
- 622.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a neurological impairment.
- 622.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 622.1.03 In any case of epilepsy or other convulsive disorder, the type, frequency, duration, and sequelae of seizures should be determined along with the individual's compliance with and response to prescribed treatment and the prognosis for seizure control.

622.2.00 INFORMATION:

622.2.01 Neurological disorders include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Epilepsy and other convulsive disorders;
- B. Central nervous system vascular accident;
- C. Brain tumors;
- D. Parkinsonian syndrome;
- E. Cerebral palsy;
- F. Spinal cord or nerve root lesions, due to any cause;
- G. Multiple sclerosis;
- H. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis;
- I. Anterior poliomyelitis;
- J. Myasthenia gravis;
- K. Muscular dystrophy;
- L. Peripheral neuropathies;
- M. Tabes dorsalis;
- N. Subacute combined cord degeneration (pernicious anemia);
- O. Traumatic brain injury or acquired brain injury;
- P. Syringomyelia;
- Q. Other degenerative neurological diseases (such as Huntington's chorea, Friedreich's ataxia, and spino-cerebellar degeneration).

- 622.2.02 The most appropriate scale to use in identifying the effects of head injury is the “Rancho” scale, because it measures post-injury behavioral and cognitive responses. It should be applied only in the first weeks and months post-injury. A Rancho level of seven is generally indicative of an impairment which will result in an impediment to employment.
- 624.0.00 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISORDERS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018
- 624.1.00 POLICY:
- 624.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a behavioral health disorder.
- 624.1.02 For an individual who is eligible for services on the basis of a substance- related and addictive disorder the individual must have completed detoxification and must be participating in or, must have successfully completed a supervised drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation program and provide documentation of participation in a maintenance program such as AA/NA. An individual diagnosed with substance dependency may be required to undergo a drug screen for eligibility determinations. Refer to Glossary: Detoxification
- 624.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 624.2.01 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field and shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 624.2.02 VR gives priority to the utilization of facilities of the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) in providing treatment for individuals with behavioral health disorders. Treatment for a behavioral health disorders, other than a substance- related and addictive disorder, may be purchased from a Program approved private psychiatrist or psychologist instead of utilizing DBHDD program only in the following circumstances:

- A. Case file documentation reflects that appropriated treatment services cannot be initiated by a DBHDD facility within 30 calendar days; or
- B. The supervisor documents in the case notes that appropriate treatment services are not available at a DBHDD facility; or
- C. The case file contains documentation that:
  - 1. an applicant was being treated by a VR approved psychologist or psychiatrist prior to referral for VR services; or
  - 2. an applicant was referred by a medical group covered by a state or local agreement; or
  - 3. A DBHDD facility is not accessible to an individual's disability.

624.2.03 For a client with a behavioral health disorder, the counselor may purchase treatment from a qualified psychiatrist, psychologist, or physician skilled in the diagnosis and treatment of dependence, only if the services are not readily available through a DBHDD clinic.

624.2.04 Behavioral Health Disorders include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Schizophrenic spectrum and other psychotic disorders: characterized by the onset of psychotic features with deterioration from a previous level of functioning.
- B. Mood disorders: characterized by a disturbance of mood, accompanied by a full or partial manic or depressive syndrome.
- C. Anxiety related disorders: In these disorders, anxiety is either the predominant disturbance or it is experienced if the individual attempts to master symptoms; for example, confronting the dreaded object or situation in a phobic disorder or resisting the obsessions or compulsions in obsessive compulsive disorders.
- D. Somatic symptom and related disorders: characterized by physical symptoms for which there are no demonstrable organic findings or known physiological mechanisms.

- E. Personality disorders: A personality disorder exists when personality traits are inflexible and maladaptive and cause either significant impairment in social or occupational functioning or subjective distress. Characteristic features are typical of the individual's long-term functioning and are not limited to discrete episodes of illness.
- F. Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders: The diagnosis includes substantial and chronic behavioral changes or physical changes associated with the regular use of substances that affect the central nervous system.

626.0.00 NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS AND LEARNING DISORDERS  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999  
Revised Date: January 16, 2018

626.1.00 POLICY:

626.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a neurodevelopmental disorder.

626.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.

626.2.00 INFORMATION:

626.2.01 Neurodevelopmental disorders include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Specific Learning disorders;
- B. Intellectual disabilities;
- C. Autism Spectrum disorder;
- D. Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders.

626.2.02 For VR purposes, a specific learning disorder may be defined as a disorder involving one or more of the cognitive processes including understanding, perceiving, and/or using language (written or spoken). The disorder manifests

itself as discrepancies associated with listening, thinking, reading, speaking, writing, spelling, or in performing mathematical calculations.

- 626.2.03 Referral procedures and joint provision of services to a public school student with a disabling condition are addressed within state and local cooperative agreements. An adult with a learning disorder may be referred to VR and served in accordance with applicable VR policies.
- 626.2.04 Services to individuals in the cooperative school program should be directed toward vocational preparation and transition work services. Remediation of specific learning disorders is considered to be the responsibility of the school system.
- 626.2.05 Examples of deficits in adaptive functioning in the presence of a Neurodevelopmental Disorder include but are not limited to:
- A. Marked restriction in the activities of daily living that limit ability to work; or
  - B. Marked difficulties in maintaining appropriate interpersonal relationships necessary for employment; or
  - C. Deficiencies of concentration, persistence or pace resulting in frequent failure to complete tasks in a timely manner; or
  - D. Repeated episodes of deterioration or decompensation in work or work-like settings that cause the individual to withdraw from that situation or to experience exacerbation of signs and symptoms (which may include deterioration of adaptive behaviors); or
  - E. Difficulty in understanding and following written or multiple verbal instruction to a degree that would impede functioning in employment; or
  - F. Problems with judgment to the degree that would impede decision making on the job; or
  - G. Inability to establish priorities or to determine the next job task to be accomplished without direct instruction; or

- H. Inability to complete an application for employment without assistance; or
- I. Limited recall to the degree that instructions on the job would have to be repeated frequently; or
- J. Inability to remain on a job task to its completion.

628.0.00 NEOPLASTIC DISEASES, MALIGNANT (CANCER)  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

628.1.00 POLICY:

628.1.01 VR may authorize or provide services for a client with a malignant neoplastic disease.

628.1.02 VR shall not authorize diagnostic surgery for an individual with a presumptively grave prognosis.

628.1.03 If a malignancy is discovered or suspected after an individual has been accepted for services, the Program may authorize a biopsy with the objective of reassessing the individual's rehabilitation potential.

628.1.04 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.

628.2.00 INFORMATION:

628.2.01 The level of impairment resulting from malignant tumors is determined from a consideration of:

- A. The site of the lesion;
- B. The formation and development (i.e. histogenesis) of the tumor;
- C. The extent of involvement (whether primary, recurrent or metastatic);
- D. The apparent and/or predicted adequacy and response to therapy (surgery, irradiation, hormones, chemotherapy, etc.);



E. The magnitude of the post-therapeutic residuals, which should be evaluated according to their effect on involved body systems.

628.2.02 Careful consideration shall be given to the prognosis of the individual when determining eligibility on the basis of malignant neoplastic disease. With early detection and treatment, many cancers now carry an excellent prognosis and impose no lasting functional limitations or vocational impediment. On the other hand, some cancers carry a presumptively grave prognosis in which the disease can be expected to progress rapidly. The counselor must understand the full ramifications of the individual's condition before making an eligibility decision in any case of malignant neoplastic disease. Refer to 210.0.00

628.2.03 Malignant neoplastic diseases include but are not limited to:

- A. Head and neck, including the tongue and pyriform sinus;
- B. Sarcoma of the skin, including angiosarcoma and mycosis fungoides;
- C. Sarcoma of soft parts;
- D. Malignant melanoma;
- E. Lymph nodes, including Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and metastatic or epidermoid carcinoma in a lymph node;
- F. Salivary glands;
- G. Thyroid gland;
- H. Breast (carcinoma or sarcoma);
- I. Skeletal system (excluding the jaw);
- J. Mandible, maxilla, orbit, or temporal fossa;
- K. Brain or spinal cord;
- L. Lungs;

- M. Pleura or mediastinum;
- N. Abdomen;
- O. Esophagus or stomach;
- P. Small or large intestine;
- Q. Liver or gallbladder;
- R. Pancreas;
- S. Kidneys, adrenal glands, or ureters - carcinoma;
- T. Urinary bladder - carcinoma;
- U. Prostate gland or testicles;
- V. Uterus - carcinoma or sarcoma (corpus or cervix);
- W. Ovaries;
- X. Leukemia (evaluate under “Hemic and Lymphatic system”);
- Y. Uterine (Fallopian) tubes - carcinoma or sarcoma;
- Z. Penis or Vulva - carcinoma.

630.0.00 IMMUNE SYSTEM  
Effective Date: October 1, 1999

630.1.00 POLICY:

630.1.01 The Program may authorize or provide services for a client with an immune system disorder.

- 630.1.02 Information used to document the impairment shall be obtained from a specialist in the field or other appropriate source and such information shall reflect the current level of functioning of the individual.
- 630.2.00 INFORMATION:
- 630.2.01 Immune system disorders generally involve the deficiency of one or more components of the immune system (i.e. antibody-producing B cells; a number of different types of cells associated with cell-mediated immunity including T-lymphocytes, macrophages and monocytes; and components of the complement system).
- 630.2.02 Dysregulation of the immune system may result in the development of a connective tissue disorder. Connective tissue disorders include several chronic multisystem disorders that differ in their clinical manifestation, course, and outcome. They generally evolve and persist for months or years and may result in loss of functional abilities.
- 630.2.03 Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection is caused by a specific retrovirus and may be characterized by susceptibility to one or more opportunistic diseases, cancers, or other conditions.
- 630.2.04 Individuals who have HIV infection or other disorders of the immune system may undergo tests to determine T-helper lymphocyte (CD4) counts. The extent of immune depression correlates with the level or rate of decline of the CD4 count. In general, when the CD4 count is 200/mm<sup>3</sup> or less (14 percent or less), the susceptibility to opportunistic disease is considerably increased. However, a reduced CD4 count alone does not establish a definitive diagnosis of HIV infection, or document the severity of functional effects of HIV infection.
- 630.2.05 Important factors to be considered in evaluating the functioning of individuals with HIV infection include but are not limited to: symptoms, such as fatigue and pain; characteristics of the illness, such as the frequency and duration of manifestations or periods of exacerbation and remission in the disease course; and the functional impact of treatment for the disease, including the side effects of medication.
- 630.2.06 The concepts in determining eligibility for persons with symptomatic HIV infection are comparable to the considerations given to establishing eligibility

for persons with certain types of cancer. Some individuals with symptomatic HIV infection, whose condition appears to be reasonably stable and slowly progressive, may have the potential for a significant work life. Therefore, the counselor may determine eligible for services some carefully selected applicants with symptomatic HIV infection when documentation of potential significant work life exists. Refer to 210.0.00

630.2.07 A person who has qualified for services, who has an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and is receiving services, may develop symptomatic HIV infection (for example, persons with hemophilia, end stage renal disease, drug dependence, or severe trauma which necessitated blood transfusions or the parenteral use of blood products). For such individuals, symptomatic HIV infection may be considered an intercurrent illness. (Refer to 430.0.00) Acute episodic care may be provided for such persons while they are continuing to undergo vocational rehabilitation. However, the Program should not provide prolonged medical care that may be needed by such a client should it become evident that the condition of the client is not stable or slowly progressive.

630.2.08 Immune system disorders include but are not limited to:

- A. Systemic lupus erythematosus, which is generally manifested by one or more of the following:
  - 1. Joint involvement;
  - 2. Muscle involvement;
- B. Ocular involvement;
- C. Respiratory involvement;
- D. Cardiovascular involvement;
- E. Digestive involvement;
- F. Renal involvement;
- G. Skin involvement;

- H. Neurological involvement;
- I. Mental involvement.
- J. Systemic vasculitis, involving one or more organs or body systems;
- K. Systemic sclerosis and scleroderma, in which involvement may be muscular, respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive, or renal, or which may be manifested by generalized scleroderma with digital contractures or by severe Raynaud's phenomena, characterized by digital ulcerations, ischemia, or gangrene;
- L. Polymyositis or dermatomyositis, which is generally manifested by proximal limb-girdle (shoulder and/or pelvic) muscle weakness, cervical muscle weakness, impaired swallowing with dysphagia, impaired respiration and/or generalized connective tissue disease;
- M. Undifferentiated connective tissue disorder, which is generally manifested by involvement of one or more organs/body systems and symptoms and signs of severe fatigue, fever, malaise, and weight loss;
- N. Immunoglobulin deficiency syndromes or deficiencies of cell-mediated immunity, excepting HIV infection;
- O. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection - Symptomatic HIV infection may be characterized by any of a myriad of opportunistic infections, cancers, and other complications signaling the compromise and decline of the immune system. These include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Bacterial infections;
  - 2. Fungal infections;
  - 3. Protozoan or helminthic infections;
  - 4. Viral infections;
  - 5. Malignant neoplasms;
  - 6. Dermatological conditions;

7. Hematologic abnormalities;
8. Neurological abnormalities;
9. HIV wasting syndrome;
10. Persistent diarrhea;
11. Cardiomyopathy;
12. Neuropathy;
13. Other infections which are resistant to treatment or require hospitalization or intravenous treatment (such as sepsis, meningitis, pneumonia, septic arthritis, endocarditis, or radiographically documented sinusitis).

# **APPENDIX A**

## **GLOSSARY**

## **APPENDIX A GLOSSARY**

# **A**

### **ADA "Americans with Disability Act" Accessibility Survey:**

An assessment of an employer's physical location by a representative of the Assistive Work Technology team which provides information related to compliance with the ADA.

### **Adjustment to Disability Services:**

Those services needed to assist an individual in adjusting to environmental challenges and/or in developing coping skills and strategies to compensate for new limitations as a result of a disability. It is not treatment of/for the disability (i.e. mental and physical restoration).

### **Applicant:**

An individual who submits an application for vocational rehabilitation services.

### **Appropriate:**

Appropriate, as it relates to provision of services, is defined to mean the service is not only desired, but is necessary for the client to reach their employment goal.

### **Appropriate Modes of Communication:**

Specialized aids and supports that enable an individual with a disability to comprehend and respond to information that is being communicated. Appropriate modes of communication include, but are not limited to, the use of interpreters, open and closed captioned videos, specialized telecommunications services and audio recordings, brailled and large print materials, materials in electronic formats, augmentative communication devices, graphic presentations, and simple language materials.

## **ASSESSMENT METHODS**

### **Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation:**

Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation is a process, which uses a combination of testing, work samples, situational assessments, prevailing labor market data, occupational information, assistive technology, functional capacities, accommodations, and modifications. The Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation provides an individualized and systematic process in



which an individual, in partnership with the evaluator, learns to identify viable vocational options and develop employment goals and objectives. (Additional information can be found in the Provider Guidelines Manual)

**Comprehensive Vocational Profile:**

Is an evaluation strategy which attempts to provide effective job matching without relying on traditional testing and work samples. The profile is a comprehensive assessment of an applicant's demonstrated skills, experiences, home, family, friends, neighborhood, informal supports, preferences, connections, and need for accommodation which, when taken as a whole, provides the basis for recommendations to the participant and the vocational rehabilitation counselor/work team. (Additional information can be found in the Provider Guidelines Manual)

**Limited Vocational Evaluation:**

A Limited Vocational Evaluation measures the participant's strengths, identifies specific areas of need, and is designed to assess specific skills and abilities for a defined training program or vocational objective. The Limited Vocational Evaluation is time-limited and is used when the comprehensive vocational evaluation and vocational profile are not indicated. (Additional information can be found in the Provider Guidelines Manual)

**Person Centered Employment Planning:**

A strategy to explore and discover potential interests and skills, to identify specific support needs for employment, and to help clarify desired employment outcomes. This is a facilitated process that includes structured planning sessions where the individual, supported by family members and others well acquainted with him or her, identify personal characteristics, interests, skills and accommodation needs. The process enhances informed choice and job search planning engaging the individual in job exploration with connections to the community. The result is a job search and job support plan for job development. Models are Discovery, Discovering your Personal Genius, Mapping, PATH and Personal Futures Planning.

**Work Evaluation:**

A Work Evaluation is a short-term assessment (30 business days or less) that utilizes objective observations of work behaviors, physical capacities, work habits, interpersonal skills and functional skills to determine vocational options and suggested supports by having the participant in a work environment. Observations may come from specific job settings or a variety of work samples.

The purpose of Work Evaluation services is to determine participant work habits, strengths, barriers, needs and to assess the participant's vocational options. Results will include recommended accommodations, necessary services and training. (Additional information can be found in the Provider Guidelines Manual)

**Assessment, Comprehensive:**

When additional information is needed to determine the employment goal to assign priority for the order of selection, or to identify the services that need to be included in the Employment Plan, a comprehensive assessment is completed. The comprehensive assessment considers the client's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests, temperament, interpersonal skills, informed choice, and related functional capacities as well as any medical, psychological and psychiatric data to determine vocational rehabilitation needs. A comprehensive assessment is a vocational rehabilitation comprehensive needs assessment.

**Assessment, Preliminary:**

A review of existing data and if appropriate and, to the extent necessary, the provision of appropriate assessment activities to obtain necessary additional data to make a determination of eligibility.

**Assistive Work Technology Device:**

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability.

**Assistive Work Technology Service:**

Any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive work technology device, including: (i) the evaluation of the needs of an individual with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the individual in his or her customary environment; (ii) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition by an individual with a disability of an assistive work technology device; (iii) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive work technology devices; (iv) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive work technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs; (v) training or technical assistance for an individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individual; and (vi) training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or others who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities, to the extent that training or technical assistance is necessary to the achievement of an employment outcome by an individual with a disability.

**Authorized Representative:**

Any representative chosen by an applicant or eligible individual, including a parent, a guardian, other family member, or an advocate, unless a representative has been appointed by a court to represent the individual, in which case the court-appointed representative is the individual's representative.

**Autism** (or autism spectrum disorder):

Refers to a range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication, as well as by unique strengths and differences.

**Auxiliary Aids and Services:**

Those services needed to effectively make aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; and, visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments.

# B

**Behavioral Health:**

Refers to a population with a mental health and/or substance usage diagnosis.

**Benefits Planning:**

The Social Security process of determining the impact of work/earnings on all public benefits (SNAP, HUD, VA, Medicaid, Medicare etc.) and the application of Social Security work incentives for individuals currently receiving SSI and/or SSDI benefits. The process also encourages and teaches self-advocacy regarding the client's benefits. Information and guidance regarding Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE), PASS Plans, and STABLE accounts may also be provided during this process.

**Blind:**

Someone with no vision or who is defined as legally blind.

# C

**Care Conference:**

A VR care conference is a collaborative discussion/meeting held to discuss the client's needs and coordinate personal assistance services. Participants may include VR professionals, the client and their representatives, school personnel, medical providers, personal assistance providers and other interested parties. Topics of discussion may include, but are not limited to, the following: physical, psycho-social, nutritional and financial needs, medical equipment, assistive work technology and fee negotiations.

**Career Advancement:**

An individual with a significant disability who is currently underemployed may seek VR assistance to secure a job that is consistent with their skill sets or whose disability hinders their ability to secure such a job. In this case, VR would follow the rehabilitation process to determine if the individual qualifies for services and, as appropriate, develop an IPE to assist the individual reach their employment goal that is more consistent with their abilities.

**Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapy (Individualized Training):**

This adjustment service is to restore safe functioning in all areas of daily living and work life after vision has decreased or been lost. Strategies include, but are not limited to, alternate methods for personal care, housekeeping, meal preparation, child care, finances, clothing care, communication, and transportation.

**Clear and Convincing Evidence:**

This standard is to be individually applied on a case-by-case basis. The term “clear” means unequivocal. “Clear and convincing” evidence might include a description of assessments, including situational assessments and supported employment assessments, from service providers who have concluded that they would be unable to meet the individual’s needs due to the severity of the individual’s disability.

**Community Rehabilitation Program:**

A program that directly provides or facilitates the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to enable the individual to maximize opportunities for employment, including career advancement.

**Comparable Program of Study:**

A post-secondary training program spanning Vocational technical certificates/diplomas, Associate; Bachelor's; Master's; or Doctoral degrees which meets the training requirement of the specific occupation (as identified by the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET)) documented on the client's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) . These training programs also include specialty professional degrees such as Medical, Veterinary, Law, and other similar professional disciplines.

**Comparable Services and Benefits:**

Services and benefits that are: (i) provided or paid for, in whole or in part, by other Federal, State, or local public agencies, by health insurance, or by employee benefits; (ii) available to the individual at the time needed to achieve the employment outcome identified in the Employment Plan; and (iii) commensurate to the services that the individual would otherwise receive from the vocational rehabilitation agency.

**Competitive Integrated Employment:**

Employment, including supported and customized, in a location typically found in the community where the client interacts for the purpose of performing the duties of the position with other employees, to the same extent that employees without disabilities in comparable positions interact with these persons. This work is compensated at a rate comparable to the customary rate paid to those without disabilities and the client is eligible for the same benefits afforded to other employees. The client with the disability must be eligible for the same opportunities for advancement as are available to employees without disabilities in similar positions.

**Consultant:**

Any professional from whom vocational rehabilitation staff obtains information to assist in determination of eligibility, Individualized Plan for Employment development, and case progress.

**Cooperative Agreement:**

A formal agreement with other partners in the statewide work force investment system to ensure cooperation, collaboration and coordination. The agreements are designed to ensure that clients receive employment services.

**Cost sharing:**

Percentage of money paid for services by client and VR based on completion of a financial needs assessment.

**Criminal Act:**

Any crime, including an act, omission, or possession under the law, which poses a substantial threat of personal injury, notwithstanding that by reason of age, insanity, or intoxication or otherwise the person engaging in the act, omission, or possession was legally incapable of committing a crime.

**Current:**

As used in the policy “current” accurately reflects the condition of the individual at the present time. Thus, the information being used reflects the current level of functioning of the individual.

# D

**Deaf:**

A person with complete hearing loss.

**Deafblind:**

A person with a combination of hearing and vision loss.

**Detoxification:**

The process of allowing the body to rid itself of a drug while managing the symptoms of withdrawal. Due to the possibility of serious if not fatal outcomes during detoxification, it is highly recommended that detoxification be provided via medical interventions in order to safely manage acute intoxication and/or withdrawal symptoms. The detoxification process includes: evaluation, stabilization and fostering readiness and entry into treatment.

**Developmental Disability:**

A developmental disability refers to a severe, chronic disability which is (a) attributable to a cognitive or physical impairment, (b) manifested prior to age twenty-two (22), (c) likely to continue indefinitely, (d) resulting in substantial limitations in at least three of seven major life functions, and (e) requiring services for an extended period of time. Individual with autism.

**Disability:**

A physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.

**Disability Awareness:**

Training designed to educate people regarding disabilities which gives people the knowledge required to carry out a job or task providing examples of good practice as opposed to poor.

**Disability Related Expenses:**

A disability related expense is any medical or assistive work technology expense that is a direct result of a client's disability which is paid by the client or by anyone counted for the financial need assessment. The counselor may request verification of the amount(s) and confirmation of payment(s). Disability related expenses which are included as a part of financial need assessment and, by virtue of their inclusion, cause the financial need criteria to be met may not later be authorized and paid by VR.

# E

**Employment Network:**

An entity that offers employment related or vocational rehabilitation service and that has been approved by the Social Security Administration to provide such services to beneficiaries under the Ticket to Work Program.

**Employment Outcome:**

This term refers to any one of several options for employment: (1) entering or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive integrated employment in an integrated labor market; (2) satisfying the vocational outcome of supported employment; or (3) satisfying the vocational outcome of self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership.

**Extended Employment:**

Extended Employment: Work in a non-integrated or sheltered setting for a public or private nonprofit agency or organization that provides compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and any needed support services to an individual with a disability to enable the individual with a disability to continue to train or otherwise prepare for competitive integrated employment, unless the individual through informed choice chooses to remain in extended employment.

Note: This definition is a quote from the Federal Regulations. Extended employment cannot be counted as a successful closure.

**Extended Period of Time:**

Three (3) months or greater.

**Extended Services:**

As used in the definition of “Supported Employment,” means ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment and that are provided by a State Program, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, from funds other than funds received under this part, 34 CFR part 363, after an individual with a most significant disability has made the transition from support provided by VR.

**Existing Information:**

Assignments, reports, evaluations and other documentation, as appropriate, addressing the client’s strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and interests that exist prior to application.

# F

**Family Member:**

For purposes of receiving vocational rehabilitation services means an individual - (i) who either (a) is a relative or guardian of an applicant or eligible individual, or (b) lives in the same household as an applicant or eligible applicant (ii) and whose receipt of vocational rehabilitation services is necessary to enable the applicant or eligible individual to achieve an employment outcome.

**Follow-along services:**

Internal on-going supports necessary to maintain the employer and client/worker relationship that is not time-limited. These supports are designed to assist the individual in sustaining competitive integrated employment. They are used to address things such as changes in job duties, changes in supervisors, issues with the employer and/or other life events that may jeopardize the client’s employment.

**Forgiveness Loans:**

Financial aid offered as a loan for which some or all of the loan amount will be eliminated in return for the recipient choosing certain careers, military service, employment settings or volunteer work as prescribed by the grantor. Example: RSA award grant scholarships.



**Functional Capacity:**

A functional capacity refers to an individual's ability to perform work-related activities in areas such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, and/or work skills.

**Functional Limitation:**

A medically documented constriction or reduction in an individual's activities which limits a functional capacity. Consequentially, it must hinder the individual from preparing for, entering into, engaging in, or retaining employment consistent with the individual's abilities and capabilities.

# H

**Hard of Hearing:**

A person with a hearing loss who has functional limitations with communication.

**Hazardous Work Site:**

For a non-agricultural occupation, a hazardous work site is a site for an occupation which has been declared to be hazardous by the Secretary of Labor under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Such occupations involve the following:

1. Manufacturing and storing of explosives;
2. Motor vehicle driving and outside helper;
3. Coal mining;
4. Logging and sawmilling;
5. Power-driven woodworking machines;
6. Exposure to radioactive substances;
7. Power-driven hoisting apparatus;
8. Power-driven metal-forming, punching, and shearing machines;
9. Mining, other than coal mining;
10. Slaughtering, or meat-packing, processing, or rendering;
11. Power-driven bakery machines;
12. Power-driven paper-products machines;
13. Manufacturing brick, tile, and kindred products;
14. Power-driven circular saws, band saws, and guillotine shears;
15. Wrecking, demolition, and ship-breaking operations;
16. Roofing operations;
17. Excavation operations.

For more information regarding hazardous work sites refer to:

Child Labor Requirements in nonagricultural occupations under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

# I

## **Informed Choice:**

The act of choosing based on factual knowledge. Informed choice requires that the client or, as appropriate, client's authorized representative, know about the available options and understand the personal implications of each of the options. This requires that VR staff person(s) provide information through appropriate modes of communication to assist the individual in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process. An informed choice is a decision based on the facts and is consistent with the facts.

## **Information and Referral:**

Referrals made to Federal and State programs, any providers of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and, as appropriate, local extended employment providers, to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection and individuals determined ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services, receive information regarding employment assistance available from other sources. (Ex. Career Centers, Career Resource Centers, Independent Living Centers, Extended Employment Centers (previously called sheltered workshops).

## **Individual with a Most Significant Disability:**

An individual who has a permanent physical or mental impairment(s) which seriously limits three (3) or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome and who requires multiple services for rehabilitation over an extended period of time. Refer to 216.0.00

NOTE: Priority Category 1 meets the program's criteria for Most Significant Disability.

## **Individual with a Significant Disability:**

An individual who has a severe, permanent physical or mental impairment(s) which seriously limits one (1) or more functional capacity in terms of an employment outcome and who requires multiple services for rehabilitation over an extended period of time. Refer to 216.0.00

NOTE: Priority Category 2 meets the program's criteria for Significant Disability.

## **Individual's Representative:**

Any representative chosen by an applicant or eligible individual, including a parent, a guardian, other family member, or an advocate, unless a representative has been appointed by a court to represent the individual, in which case the court-appointed representative is the individual's representative.

**Intercurrent Illness:**

An intercurrent illness is an acute condition, which occurs during the course of rehabilitation which if not treated will constitute a significant barrier to the achievement of the client's employment outcome. The illness need not be related to the impairment(s) upon which eligibility is based.

**Integrated Setting:**

With respect to the provision of services, means a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals. With respect to an employment outcome, means a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals, other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons.

**Interpreter Services:**

Interpreter services are sign language or oral transliteration services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and tactile interpretation services for individuals who are deaf – blind. Specially trained individuals perform sign language or oral transliteration. This service also includes real-time captioning services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. It does not include foreign language interpretation.

# J

**Job Analysis:**

A service which involves a systematic study of a job and the work demands of that job. It involves defining what the worker does in relation to data, people, and things; identifying methodologies and techniques used; the machines, tools, and equipment used; materials, products, and services which result; and the traits required of the worker.

**Job Ready:**

The point at which the client possesses the soft and hard skills plus the supports needed to qualify for the job.

**Job Retention:**

Job retention services apply to both individuals who are employed at the time of application or employed following the provision of rehabilitation services (Employed status). Job retention services are restricted to include only those services needed to assist an individual in learning their job duties, to address work site behaviors, and/or worksite accommodations. These services are exempt from financial need. Examples include: working with the employer, job coaching/skills training, counseling and guidance, etc.

**Job Search:**

Service to assists the client in identifying and securing competitive integrated employment based on the individual's employment goal.

# L

**Labor Market Information (LMI):**

Information provided to assist counselor and client in determining an appropriate employment goal.

**Local Workforce Investment Board:**

Local boards established by local elected officials to work in partnership with them in setting policy for coordinated workforce investment systems in local regions and labor market areas. The local boards will design and oversee the "one-stop shops". (Authority: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)

**Low Vision/Visually Impaired:**

Person with uncorrectable vision that does not meet the definition of legal blindness, but has functional limitations due to the vision loss.

# M

**Maintenance:**

Provision of supportive services such as food, shelter, and clothing that are in excess of the normal expenses of the individual and that are necessitated by the individual's participation

in their vocational rehabilitation program. Maintenance includes room and board, lodging, and meals.

**Market Price:**

The prevailing price, as determined by supply and demand, at which goods, services etc., may be bought or sold in an open market.

**May:**

Allowed or permitted. When “may” is used, professional judgment shall be used to determine the most appropriate choice, given the unique needs and situation of the client.

**MAXIMUS:**

The company with the computerized system that is used by the Social Security Administration for the operation of the Ticket to Work Program.

**Mediation:**

A voluntary process of alternative dispute resolution regarding a determination made by VR staff involving the provision of services to an applicant or eligible individual.

In mediation, an independent third party assists the parties to reach a mutually acceptable solution and does not favor either party.

**Merit Scholarships:**

Financial aid for which eligibility is not based on financial need, but is based on an individual’s unique talents, skills and abilities. Examples of areas in which merit scholarships may be awarded include, but are not limited to, academics, athletics and the arts.

**Monitoring:**

Maintaining awareness of the client's progress.

**Morbid Obesity:**

A diagnosis based on an excess of body fat greater than a BMI of 40, or weighing 100 pounds over the ideal body weight resulting in co-morbidities or the increase risk of co-morbidity(ies).

# N

**Negotiation:**

An informal, voluntary process of alternative dispute resolution regarding a decision made by VR staff involving the provision of services to an applicant or eligible individual. This form of dispute resolution is a process of negotiating an agreement or settlement among the involved parties (usually the client, their representative, and VR staff). Negotiation may occur with or without Client Assistance Program (CAP) involvement. If CAP is involved, the CAP representative will be advocating on behalf of the client. Negotiation is not limited to clients and VR staff. Negotiation may involve other agencies or external entities.

## P

### **Parental permission form:**

Form signed by parents/guardians allowing VR staff to obtain IEP/Psychological/504 Plan for students with disabilities in an educational program and to provide services to students with disabilities.

### **Partnership Plus:**

An option that enables a state VR agency and an Employment Network (EN) to provide services to the same Ticket holder consecutively. Following case closure, regardless of closure reason, the client has a ninety (90) day period to assign their Ticket to another EN which allows the beneficiary to receive additional services such as job retention and ongoing support.

### **Permanent Impairment:**

Any physical or mental condition which, for an individual, seriously limits functional capacity(ies), i.e., ambulation, communication, speech, upper/lower extremity functioning, vision, etc. in terms of employability and which can be expected to impose a lasting reduction in function regardless of medical or psychological intervention.

### **Person Centered Employment Planning:**

A strategy to explore and discover potential interests and skills, to identify specific support needs for employment, and to help clarify desired employment outcomes. This is a facilitated process that includes structured planning sessions where the individual, supported by family members and others well acquainted with him or her, identify personal characteristics, interests, skills and accommodation needs. The process enhances informed choice and job search planning engaging the individual in job exploration with connections to the community. The result is a job search and job support plan for job development. Models are

Discovery, Discovering your Personal Genius, Mapping, PATH and Personal Futures Planning.

**Personal Assessment:**

A detailed evaluation of a client's life situation relative to the goal of work which can occur throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

**Personal Assistance Services:**

A range of services provided as necessary to assist an individual with a qualified disability in performing daily living activities (including self-care) ordinarily performed without assistance (in the absence of a disability) in order to achieve an employment outcome. The services must be designed to increase the individual's control in life and ability to perform everyday activities on or off the job. Reader services, interpreter services, and personal care attendant services are considered personal assistant services. This service must be necessary and is only provided to allow or assist with an individual in participating in primary VR services. The services may include training in managing, supervising, and directing personal assistance services.

**Personal Care Attendant Services:**

Personal care attendant services are those personal services that an attendant performs for an individual with a disability such as bathing, feeding, dressing, toileting, transferring, providing mobility, transportation and similar activities.

**Physical or mental impairment:**

An injury, disease, or other condition that materially limits, or if not treated is expected to materially limit, mental or physical functioning.

**Placement Follow-up:**

Monitoring the success of the clients' employment.

**Planned Counseling and Guidance:**

Planned counseling and guidance means discrete therapeutic counseling and guidance services including: personal adjustment counseling, counseling that addresses medical, family, or social issues and vocational counseling for the purpose of determining an appropriate employment goal. This service is distinct from the general counseling and guidance relationship that exists between the counselor and the individual during the entire rehabilitation process.

**Potentially eligible:**

For purposes of pre-employment transition services, as meaning all students with disabilities, regardless of whether they have applied for or been determined eligible for the VR program.

**Pre-Employment Transition Services:**

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are provided to individuals meeting the student with a disability definition. Individuals not meeting this definition can receive the same services; however, services provided to these individuals are not included in the 15% set aside of the VR 110 Budget.

**Primary Services:**

Major services that can be provided independently of any other service and are necessary to prepare the eligible individual for employment. For the purpose of determining the Order of Selection Priority Category assignment, the primary service must address an identified functional capacity as it relates to the individual's disability. Primary services include: information and referral services; physical and mental restoration services; vocational and other training services; job related-services; Supported Employment services; Self-Employment services; assistive work technology; transition services; technical assistance and discrete therapeutic counseling and guidance. Routine counseling and guidance to facilitate participation in the VR process may not be counted as a primary service.

**Proprietary Schools:**

For-profit businesses which provide education and training. They may offer non-degree (diploma/certificate) vocational training, bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees. They may be privately owned, a partnership or a corporation.

**Public Health Setting:**

State hospitals, State operated Community Services, and provider agencies with a state contract, letter of agreement, or provider agreement.

# Q

**Qualified Individual:**

An individual who has been assessed and determined eligible for services and qualified for an open category under the Order of Selection.



# R

**Reader Services:**

Reader services are for individuals who cannot read print because of blindness or other disabilities. Reader services include, in addition to reading aloud, transcription of printed information into Braille or sound recordings if the individual requests such transcription or similar activities. Reader services are generally for individuals who are blind or deaf-blind, but may also include individuals unable to read because of serious neurological disorders, specific learning disabilities, or other physical or mental impairments.

**Reasonable:**

Reasonable is defined to assist VR staff in being prudent in the authorization for payment of any service. Factors to be considered include the cost of service in relation to the employment goal, work expectancy following the provision of the service, and the presence of a strong positive prognosis for successful employment. Reasonableness should be considered throughout the life of the case.

**Related Factor:**

Any social, educational, and/or environmental circumstance identified as exerting a direct, significant negative impact on the ability of the client to successfully achieve an employment outcome

**Required:**

VR services are required when an individual needs specialized services related to their disability in order to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice and the services are not available elsewhere or cannot be provided without VR assistance.

**Restricted Merit Scholarship:**

A financial aid award based on an individual's unique talents, skills and abilities such as exceptional GPAs, athletic talents or artistic skills which is restricted by the grantor to specific post-secondary expenses (e.g. tuition, books). This type of scholarship is a resource which should be treated like a comparable benefit. The amount deducted from the amount VR would ordinarily have paid must equal the actual cost paid by the scholarship for the restricted item. Any remainder amount cannot be applied to other services for VR purposes.

# S

**Section 511:**

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, Section 511, has provisions on the limitations on the use of subminimum wage which prohibits an “entity” that holds a section 14(c) certificate from compensating an individual with a disability at a *subminimum wage* unless certain conditions are met.

**Secure, Retain, Advance in, and Regain:**

Secure: To obtain initial employment; Retain: To keep or maintain employment; Advance in: To advance in current or new employment; Regain: To reenter the work force.

**Selected Supports:**

Can include family member, interpreters, teachers, job coaches, specialty coordinators, vendors, AWT, or others who join the client at assessments and or meetings to support their success.

**Self-supporting:**

Self-supporting is defined as providing one’s own total support, i.e. food, clothing, housing, health, recreational and travel expenses. Wards of the state are excluded from this definition.

**Service record:**

Case record for a reportable individual.

**Shall:**

Shall is used chiefly in formal contexts and legal documents and means “mandatory,” “must,” or “required.” When “shall” is used, there is no choice; the term is imperative.

**Specialized Skills Training:**

Skill focused training which is required for employment at the entry level of a specific occupation designated by the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET). The requirement of this specialized training must be demonstrated by documentation of industry standards (i.e. standard qualifications for the job and/or required certification for the job).

**Stable:**

A physical or mental condition which is not unpredictable in nature or subject to rapid decompensation and allows for identification of limitations and capabilities affecting occupational performance.

**Statewide Workforce Investment Board:**

A newly formulated board, appointed by and including the governor, which has the broad authority to guide the development of the workforce investment system and to assist in the development of the state plan of federally funded programs of job training, adult education and literacy, and vocational rehabilitation. The board members include representatives from business, partners in the workforce investment system, employers, local elected officials, state legislators, economic development officials, labor unions, and the general public. (Authority: Workforce Investment Act of 1998)

**Statewide Workforce Investment System:**

The workforce investment act of 1998 created a statewide system of linkages among federal, state, and local employment and job training agencies in order to improve coordination, to increase efficiency, and to ensure that those agencies work together. The components of the workforce investment system are streamlined and more flexible programs are statutorily linked to provide workforce investment activities that increase the employment, job retention, and earnings of participants. (Authority: Workforce Investment Act of 1998)

**Substantive Policy Change:**

Changes that directly impact the nature and scope of the services provided to individuals with disabilities, or the manner in which individuals interact with the VR agency, particularly as it pertains to communication with the VR counselor or the delivery of VR services. Examples of substantive policy changes include: any changes to policies or procedures that fundamentally alter the rights and responsibilities of VR consumers in the VR process; proposed organizational changes to the VR agency that will likely effect the manner in which services are delivered; any changes that affect the nature and scope of VR services provided; changes in formal or informal dispute procedures; the adoption or amendment of policies instituting an order of selection; and changes to the VR consumer financial participation policies. Changes that are administrative in nature are not considered substantive policy changes.

**Substantial Impediment to Employment:**

A physical or mental impairment which (in light of medical, psychological, vocational, educational, and other related factors) results in functional limitations that hinders an individual from preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment consistent with

their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. The existence and extent of the impairment must be the primary reason that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome such that there is a direct relationship between the disability or disabilities and employability.

**Supported Employment:**

Competitive work in an integrated work setting, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual with the most significant disability, with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Supported employment also includes transitional employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness.

**Supportive Services:**

Services which support a primary service. Supportive services are never provided alone (e.g. Childcare, Transportation, Personal Assistance, Maintenance). They are only provided in conjunction with a primary service. Support services must be both appropriate and reasonable.

# T

**Technology Access Training:**

Refers to individualized training in the use of adaptive technology for the purpose of participating in VR services leading to an employment outcome. Technology access training includes but is not limited to, learning the use of brailers, note-takers, scanners, screen readers, Augmentative Communication Devices, and computers which may require basic training in computer software such as word processing et al.

**Transition Services:**

A coordinated set of activities for a student to facilitate movement from school to post school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training and competitive integrated employment. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on individual student's needs and preferences and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school objectives, and, when appropriate, functional vocational evaluation and acquisition of daily living skills. Transition services must promote or facilitate the accomplishment of long-term rehabilitation outcome identified in the student's Individualized Plan for Employment.

**Transitional Employment:**

A series of temporary job placements in integrated settings with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness. In transitional employment, the provision of ongoing support services must include continuing sequential job placements until job permanency is achieved.

**Trial Work Experience:**

Work, or simulated work, either in the community or in a community rehabilitation program to enable the determination of whether an applicant can benefit from rehabilitation services in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome.

# V

**Veteran:**

A person who has served in America's Armed Forces.

**Vocational Assessment:**

A multi-disciplinary process involving the coordination, collection, and analysis of formal evaluative data to assist in making decisions regarding an employment goal. It is also an informal process that occurs routinely throughout the life of a rehabilitation case, beginning with observations of client behaviors and characteristics during the initial meeting and including the reading and synthesizing of subsequent evaluative information.

**Vocational Evaluation, Comprehensive:**

An individualized service which helps to identify a client's viable vocational options and employment goal. The comprehensive vocational evaluation incorporates background information (e.g., education, psychological and work history, medical/physical capabilities, and behavioral status) and uses a combination of standardized testing, work samples, situational assessments, community-based job tryouts, assistive work technology and other techniques to develop vocational recommendations for the client and counselor. The planning for and provision of the vocational evaluation should incorporate respect for the client's personal process of growth and development of insight leading to the client's informed choice.

**Vocational Evaluation, Limited:**

An individual service for assessing an individual's aptitudes, interests, and/or academic levels to develop a realistic employment goal. The Limited Vocational Evaluation is designed to measure the skills and abilities of an individual for a specific training program or vocational objective. This is a time-limited assessment and is used when the comprehensive vocational evaluation and vocational profile are not indicated.

**Vocational Profile:**

An in-depth evaluation of a client who is unable to fully benefit from a comprehensive or limited vocational evaluation and/or has very little or no work history. The profile may or may not incorporate standardized assessment tools, but shall include observation techniques that provide detailed information related to the client's activities of daily living, emotional function, independent living needs and accommodations for the home and/or work. The profile is based on a case file review, client interview and interviews with parents or other stake holders to provide insight to client abilities, strengths, limitations and support systems. This evaluation clearly determines training, support and accommodations recommended for successful competitive integrated employment. It also provides detailed information related to the clients activities of daily living, emotional functioning, independent living needs and accommodations for home.

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program Allowance:**

The amount of income not considered in determining financial eligibility. This amount is calculated at 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.

# W

**WIOA/VR Reporting Purposes:**

**Participant:**

An individual is a "participant" if he or she has an approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and has begun receiving VR services (i.e., individual has applied for and been determined eligible for VR services and has begun receiving services under an IPE).

**Reportable Individual:**

Students with a disability ages 14 - 21 on an IEP or 504 in an educational program. Individuals who have applied for VR services, but have not yet met the definition of "participant"; and potentially eligible students with disabilities receiving pre-employment transition services prior to applying and being determined eligible for VR services and having an approved IPE (e.g., the student does not meet the definition of a "participant").

**Youth with a Disability:**

Youth with a disability is defined as anyone ages 14-24 with the most significant disabilities as described in RPM 9.10.2. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that 50% of our Supported Employment funding be spent on the provision of Supported Employment services for youth with disabilities.

**Student with a Disability:**

In the State of Georgia, and in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a student with a disability is anyone between the ages of 14-21 who is enrolled in a recognized education program, receiving services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Special Education) or considered 504 eligible (including individuals receiving services from Vocational Rehabilitation).

**Potentially Eligible Student with Disability:**

Individuals who meet the definition of a student with a disability, are eligible for pre-employment transition services regardless of whether they have applied for or been determined eligible for the VR program.

**Pre-Employment Transition Services:**

For purposes of pre-employment transition services, this means all students with disabilities, regardless of whether they have applied for or been determined eligible for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. The required Pre-ETS, available to students with disabilities, include the following:

1. Job exploration counseling,
2. Work-based learning experiences,
3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs,
4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and
5. Instruction on self-advocacy.

Individuals who do not meet the definition of a student with a disability, may receive similar or additional VR transition services; however, these services are not included in the 15% set aside of the GVRA 110 Budget.

**Work Based Learning Specialist (RWS Staff):**

Assists Students with disabilities to gain work experience and job placement.

**Work Evaluation:**

A short term assessment (thirty (30) days or less) that uses work or simulated work to assess an individual's stamina and physical capacities; ability to remain on task and other work

habits; interpersonal skills and ability to follow directions; functional skills; and/or ability to do specific tasks. The purpose of the Work Evaluation is to determine client work-related strengths and deficits, to assess client vocational options, and to recommend appropriate interventions or necessary services.

# Y

## **Youth with a Disability**

Youth with a disability is defined as anyone ages 14-24 with the most significant disabilities as described in RPM 9.10.2. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that 50% of our Supported Employment funding be spent on the provision of Supported Employment services for youth with disabilities.



# **APPENDIX B**

## **Procedures for Closing Active Cases from Wait List**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PROCEDURES FOR CLOSING ACTIVE CASES FROM WAIT LIST**

The following procedures are to be carefully followed in closing active cases from Wait List status:

- Review the caseload to determine which clients' cases will be affected.
- Contact the client and have a verbal conversation explaining the Wait List and what it means to be assigned to it.
- Using the sample Notice of Change concerning Rehabilitation Services, located in the "VR SharePoint," complete an individual notice.

Note: The date of the letter and the date of the notice must be the same.

- If you do not hear from the client by the date the action is taking place, paper process the case through Wait List status (if it is not already in this status), and close it Closed-Wait list.
- If a client notifies you they do not want to have their case closed but wants to remain on the wait list, notify your supervisor and place or keep the case in Wait List status.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **Financial Need Assessment**

# Appendix C

## Financial Need Assessment

### Table A – 2023 VR Program Allowance

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>150% of Federal Poverty Level</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>\$21,870.00</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>\$29,580.00</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>\$37,290.00</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>\$45,000.00</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>\$52,710.00</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>\$60,420.00</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>\$68,130.00</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>\$75,840.00</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>\$83,550.00</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>\$91,260.00</b>
<b>11+</b>	<b>\$7,710.00</b> <b>For each additional individual</b>

**Appendix C Table B - VR Cost Sharing Chart**

<b>Amount of Income Over the VR Allowance</b>  (TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME - Line IIC on FNA)	<b>VR's Percentage of Approved Fee</b>  (for a single service)	<b>Client's Percentage of Approved Fee</b>  (for a single service)	<b>Household's MAX Out-of-Pocket Yearly Expense</b>  (% of TOTAL RESOURCES – Line IIA2 on FNA)
\$0.00 (Financial Need Met)	100%	0%	0%
\$0.01 - \$2,000.00	99%	1%	5%
\$2,000.01 - \$4,000.00	99%	1%	5%
\$4,000.01 - \$6,000.00	99%	1%	5%
\$6,000.01 - \$8,000.00	99%	1%	5%
\$8,000.01 - \$10,000.00	99%	1%	5%
\$10,000.01 - \$12,000.00	96%	4%	10%
\$12,000.01 - \$14,000.00	93%	7%	10%
\$14,000.01 - \$16,000.00	90%	10%	10%
\$16,000.01 - \$18,000.00	87%	13%	15%
\$18,000.01 - \$20,000.00	84%	16%	15%
\$20,000.01 - \$22,000.00	81%	19%	15%
\$22,000.01 - \$24,000.00	76%	24%	15%
\$24,000.01 - \$26,000.00	71%	29%	20%
\$26,000.01 - \$28,000.00	66%	34%	20%
\$28,000.01 - \$30,000.00	61%	39%	20%
\$30,000.01 - \$32,000.00	56%	44%	25%
\$32,000.01 - \$34,000.00	51%	49%	25%
\$34,000.01 - \$36,000.00	46%	54%	25%
\$36,000.01 - \$38,000.00	41%	59%	30%
\$38,000.01 - \$40,000.00	36%	64%	30%
\$40,000.01 - \$42,000.00	31%	69%	30%
\$42,000.01 - \$44,000.00	26%	74%	35%
\$44,000.01 - \$46,000.00	21%	79%	35%
\$46,000.01-\$48,000.00	16%	84%	35%
\$48,000.01 - \$50,000.00	11%	89%	40%
\$50,000.01-\$52,000.00	6%	94%	40%
\$52,000.01-\$54,000.00	1%	99%	45%
\$54,000.01 and above	0%	100%	50%

# **Appendix D**

## **Technical Assistance Briefs**

# **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BRIEFS (TABs)**

## **CONTENTS**

**TAB 1    Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act:  
Section 511 Limitations on the Use of  
Subminimum Wage**

**TAB 2    Ticket to Work Program**

**APPENDIX D**  
**TAB 1**  
**Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act:**  
**Section 511 Limitations on the Use of Subminimum Wage**

**IN BRIEF**

**The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, Section 511, has provisions on the limitations on the use of subminimum wage which prohibits an “entity” that holds a section 14(c) certificate from compensating an individual with a disability at a *subminimum wage* unless certain conditions are met.**

**The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency believes that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or re-enter competitive integrated employment.**

***July 1, 2017***

**The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was enacted on July 22, 2014. Section 458 of WIOA amends Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by adding section 511 that limits the ability of employers to pay a subminimum wage to workers with disabilities. The section 511 limitations were effective on July 22, 2016.**

WIOA prohibits employers from paying subminimum wage to persons with disabilities under section 14(c) unless each worker has been regularly provided with career counseling and information about self-advocacy, self-determination, and peer mentoring training opportunities in the local area. WIOA also prevents employers from hiring individuals with disabilities age 24 and younger (youth) after July 22, 2016 at a subminimum wage, unless the employer obtains copies of documentation proving that these individuals have received and completed various services designed to improve their access to competitive integrated employment, including transition services, vocational rehabilitation and career counseling services.

*U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage & Hour Division’s Letter to Certificate Holders; July 27, 2016*



## **VR's Responsibilities for Individuals of Any Age**

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VR must provide individuals with disabilities earning subminimum wage certain services: (1) Career Counseling and (2) Information and Referral Services.

It is important to remember that upon receipt of the referral from employers of less than 15 employees, VR must inform the employee within 30 calendar days of self-advocacy, self-determination, and peer mentoring opportunities in that geographic area.

In Section 511, the provision outlines the following requirements for carrying out these services: For individuals of any age hired in subminimum wage prior to July 22, 2016, these services must be carried out once before July 22, 2017 and annually thereafter. However, individuals hired in subminimum wage after July 22, 2016, these services must be carried out every 6 months for the first year and annually thereafter for as long as the employee is earning subminimum wage.

### ***Documentation***

VR will complete the Verification of Receipt form within 45 days after completion of the required activities, but preferably this should be completed onsite. If the employee refuses to participate in the required activities, VR will provide the Refusal of Participation form to the employee within 10 days. The documentation will be retained by VR as well as the Section 14(c) certificate holder and the employee.

## **VR's Responsibilities for Youth**

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As stated above, The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency believes that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or re-enter competitive integrated employment.

### ***Services for Youth***

VR must provide youth with disabilities wishing to earn subminimum wage the following services:

- Documentation of pre-employment transition services or transition services provided by the school;
- Application for VR services;

- VR services to achieve an employment outcome on the Employment Plan within a reasonable period of time with supports;
- Case closure; and,
- Career counseling and information and referral services

VR will establish a process that ensures that the youth with disabilities receive documentation of the completion of transition services while in school.

## **Career Counseling & Information and Referral Process**

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VR will provide career counseling and information and referral services in small group settings (no more than 15 employees). Employees should be grouped by participation and communication needs.

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### ***VR's Career Counseling and Information and Referral Process (CC&IR)***

Section 14(c) Certificate Holders (Employers) can go to our website for information. <https://VR.georgia.gov/press-releases/2016-12-02/limitations-use-subminimum-wage-career-counseling-and-information-and>. From there, the employer can complete a request for VR to provide CC&IR to their employees. When the counselor receives the referral, they should contact the Employer within 5 business days.

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# **APPENDIX D**

## **TAB 2**

### **Ticket to Work Program**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The Ticket to Work program is to give Social Security Beneficiaries the ability to choose where to go for employment services and give them protection from Social Security's medical review once they have entered into an Employment Plan with an Employment Network or State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency and the Ticket is "assigned" to that Employment Network or put "in-use" with the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

*July 1, 2017*

#### **Ticket to Work Program**

The Ticket to Work Program is an employment program for people with disabilities who are interested in going to work. The Ticket program is part of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 legislation designed to remove many of the barriers that previously influenced people's decisions about going to work because of the concerns over losing health care coverage. The goal of the Ticket Program is to increase opportunities and choices for Social Security disability beneficiaries to obtain employment utilizing Vocational Rehabilitation and other support services from public and private providers, employer, and other organizations.

Under the Ticket Program, the Social Security Administration provides disability beneficiaries with a Ticket to Work they may use to obtain the services and jobs they need from a new universe of organizations called Employment Networks. The beneficiary is free to choose when and whether to use the Ticket to obtain the assistance needed to return to work or go to work for the first time.

#### **Who is eligible for a ticket?**

Ticket eligible beneficiaries will:

- Be between the ages of 18 and 64
- Currently receiving cash benefits with SSI (Title II) and/or SSDI (Title XVI)
- The individual must be entitled based on the Social Security's disability standard for adults.

#### **Beneficiary Participation**

The Ticket to Work Program is a voluntary employment program. A beneficiary's non-use of a ticket will not affect entitlement to disability-based benefits. In choosing to participate, beneficiaries will assign their ticket to Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

## **Timely Progress Review**

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Maximus notifies the client that at the end of every 12-month period the Social Security Administration conducts a review to determine if the beneficiary is making the expected progress toward self-sufficiency. The Timely Progress guidelines include monitoring the work earnings, educational and technical training or a combination of the work plus educational requirements.

## **How does participating in the Ticket Program affect a beneficiary?**

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If a beneficiary is participating in the Ticket to Work program and making the Timely Progress Review, the Social Security Administration will not begin a medical Continuing Disability Review during the period in which the beneficiary is using a ticket. Continuing Disability Reviews that are conducted by the Social Security Administration to determine if a beneficiary still has a disability under the Social Security Administration guidelines. If the Social Security Administration finds that the beneficiary is considered no longer disabled, it may stop benefits. A medical Continuing Disability Review will not take place during the period in which the beneficiary is using the ticket. However, beneficiaries who receive a notice of a Continuing Disability Review before they have assigned their ticket will be required to complete the review. If the beneficiary is found to have medically recovered and is participating in a Vocational Rehabilitation program, he or she may seek benefit continuation under Section 301.